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CORRESPONDENCE
WITH
MR GANDHI
AUGUST 1942 - APRIL 1944

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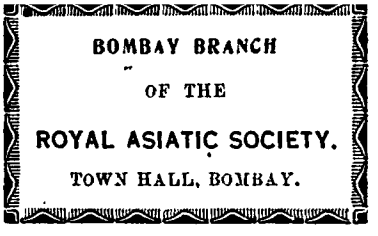

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CORRESPONDENCE

WITH

MR. GANDHI

108876

August 1942—April 1944

(Published with authority)

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CORRESPONDENCE WITH MR. GANDHI, AUGUST 1942—APRIL 1944.

I.—THE 1942 LETTERS.

(1)

August 14th, 1942.

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

The Government of India were wrong in precipitating the crisis. The Government resolution justifying this step is full of distortions and misrepresentations. That you have the approval of your Indian "colleagues" can have no significance, except this, that in India you can always command such services. That co-operation is an additional justification for the demand of withdrawal irrespective of what people and parties may say.

The Government of India should have waited at least till the time I inaugurated mass action. I had publicly stated that I fully contemplated sending you a letter before taking concrete action. It was to be an appeal to you for an impartial examination of the Congress case. As you know, the Congress has readily filled in every omission that has been discovered in the conception of its demand. So could I have dealt with every difficulty if you had given me the opportunity. The precipitate action of the Government leads one to think that they were afraid that the extreme caution and gradualness with which the Congress was moving towards direct action might make world opinion veer round to the Congress, as it had already begun doing, and expose the hollowness of the grounds for the Government's rejection of the Congress demand. They should surely have waited for an authentic report of my speeches on Friday and on Saturday night after the passing of the resolution by the All-India Congress Committee. You would have found in them that I would not hastily begin action. You should have taken advantage of the interval foreshadowed in them, and explored every possibility of satisfying the Congress demand.

The resolution says "The Government of India have waited patiently in the hope that wiser counsels might prevail. They have been disappointed in that hope". I suppose wiser counsels here means abandonment of its demand by the Congress. Why should the abandonment of the demand legitimate at all times be hoped for by a Government pledged to guarantee independence to India? Is it a challenge that could only be met by immediate repression instead of patient reasoning with the demanding party? I venture to suggest that it is a long draft upon the credulity of mankind to say that the acceptance of the demand "would plunge India into confusion". Anyway the summary rejection of the demand *has* plunged the nation and the Government into confusion. The Congress was making every effort to identify India with the Allied cause.

The Government resolution says "The Governor-General in Council has been aware too for some days past of dangerous preparations by the Congress Party for unlawful and in some cases violent activities directed among other things to interruption of communications and public utility services, the organisation of strikes, tampering with the loyalty of Government servants, and interference with defence measures including recruitment". This is a gross distortion of the reality. Violence was never contemplated at any stage. A definition of what could be included in non-violent action has been interpreted in a sinister and subtle manner, as if the Congress was preparing for violent action. Everything was openly discussed among Congress circles, for nothing was to be done secretly. And why is it tampering with your loyalty if I ask you to give up a job which is harming the British people?

Instead of publishing behind the backs of principal Congressmen the misleading paragraph the Government, immediately they came to know of the "preparations", should have brought to book the parties concerned with the preparations. That would have been the appropriate course. By their unsupported allegations in the resolution they have laid themselves open to the charge of unfair dealing.

The Congress movement was intended to evoke in the people the measure of sacrifice sufficient to compel attention. It was intended to demonstrate what measure of popular support it had. Was it wise at this time of the day to seek to suppress a popular movement avowedly non-violent?

The Government resolution further says "The Congress is not India's mouthpiece. Yet in the interests of securing their own dominance and in persuit of the totalitarian policy its leaders have consistently impeded the efforts made to bring India to full nationhood". It is a gross libel thus to accuse the oldest national organisation of India. This language lies ill in the mouth of a Government which has, as can be proved from published records, consistently thwarted every national effort for attaining freedom, and sought to suppress the Congress by hook or by crook.

The Government of India have not condescended to consider the Congress offer that if simultaneously with the declaration of the independence of India they could not trust the Congress to form a stable provisional government, they should ask the Muslim League to do so, and that any national government formed by the League would be loyally accepted by the Congress. Such an offer is hardly consistent with the charge of totalitarianism against the Congress.

Let me examine the Government offer. "It is that as soon as hostilities cease, India shall devise for herself, with full freedom of decision and on a basis embracing all and not only a single party, the form of government which she regards as most suited to her conditions." Has this offer any reality about it? All parties have not agreed now. Will it be any more possible after the War? And if the parties have to act before independence is in their hands? Parties grow up like mushrooms, for without proving their representative character, the Government will welcome them as they have done in the past, and if they, the parties, oppose the Congress and its activities, though they may do lip homage to independence, frustration is inherent in the Government offer. Hence the logical cry of withdrawal first. Only after the end of British power and a fundamental change in the political status of India from bondage to freedom, will the formation of a truly representative government, whether provisional or permanent, be possible. The living burial of the author of the demand has not resolved the deadlock, it has aggravated it.

Then the resolution proceeds "The suggestion put forward by the Congress Party that the millions of India uncertain as to the future are ready, despite the sad lessons of so many martyr countries, to throw themselves into the arms of the invaders is one that the Government of India cannot accept as a true representation of the feeling of the people of this great country". I do not know about the millions, but I can give my own evidence in support of the Congress statement. It is open to the Government not to believe the Congress evidence. No imperial power likes to be told that it is in peril. It is because the Congress is anxious for Great Britain to avoid the fate that has overtaken other imperial powers that it asks her to shed imperialism voluntarily by declaring India independent. The Congress has not approached the movement with any but the friendliest motives. Congress seeks to kill imperialism as much for the sake of the British people and humanity as for India. Notwithstanding assertions to the contrary, I maintain that the Congress has no interests of its own, apart from that of the whole of India and the world.

The following passage from the peroration in the resolution is interesting. "But on them lies the task of defending India, of maintaining India's capacity to wage war, of safeguarding India's interests, of holding the balance between the different sections of her people without fear or favour". All I can say is that it is a mockery of truth after the experience of Malaya, Singapore and Burma. It is sad to find the Government of India claiming to hold the "balance" between the parties for which it is itself demonstrably responsible.

One thing more. The declared cause is common between the Government of India and us. To put it in the most concrete terms it is the protection of the freedom of China and Russia. The Government of India think that the

freedom of India is not necessary for winning the cause. I think exactly the opposite. I have taken Jawaharlal Nehru as my measuring rod. His personal contacts make him feel much more the misery of the impending ruin of China and Russia than I can—and may I say than even you can. In that misery he tried to forget his old quarrel with imperialism. He dreads much more than I do the success of Facism and Nazism. I have argued with him for days together. He fought against my position with a passion which I have no words to describe. But the logic of facts overwhelmed him. He yielded when he saw clearly that without the freedom of India that of the other two was in great jeopardy. Surely you are wrong in having imprisoned such a powerful friend and ally. If, notwithstanding the common cause the Government's answer to the Congress demand is hasty repression, they will not wonder if I draw the inference that it was not so much the Allied cause that weighed with the British Government, as the unexpressed determination to cling to the possession of India as an indispensable part of the imperial policy. This determination led to the rejection of the Congress demand and precipitated repression. The present mutual slaughter on a scale never before known to history is suffocating enough. But the slaughter of truth accompanying the butchery and enforced by the falsity of which the resolution is reeking adds strength to the Congress position.

It causes me deep pain to have to send you this long letter. But however much I dislike your action, I remain the same friend you have known me. I would still plead for reconsideration of the Government of India's whole policy. Do not disregard the pleading of one who claims to be a sincere friend of the British people. Heaven guide you!

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI.

---

(2)

August 22nd, 1942.

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Thank you very much for your letter, dated the 14th August, which reached me only a day or two ago.

2. I have read, I need not say, what you have been good enough to say in your letter with very close attention, and I have given full weight to your views. But I fear in the result that it would not be possible for me either to accept the criticisms which you advance of the resolution of the Governor-General in Council, or your request that the whole policy of the Government of India should be reconsidered.

Yours sincerely,

LINLITHGOW.

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(3)

September 23rd, 1942.

To

The Secretary, Government of India, Home Department.

SIR,

In spite of the chorus of approval sung by the Indian Councillors and others of the present Government policy in dealing with the Congress, I venture to assert that, had the Government but awaited my contemplated letter to His Excellency the Viceroy and the result thereafter, no calamity would have overtaken the country. The reported deplorable destruction would have most certainly been avoided.

In spite of all that has been said to the contrary, I claim that the Congress policy still remains unequivocally non-violent. The wholesale arrest of the

Congress leaders seems to have made the people wild with rage to the point of losing self-control. I feel that the Government, not the Congress, are responsible for the destruction that has taken place. The only right course for the Government seems to me to be to release the Congress leaders, withdraw all repressive measures and explore ways and means of conciliation. Surely the Government have ample resources to deal with any overt act of violence. Repression can only breed discontent and bitterness.

Since, I am permitted to receive newspapers, I feel that I owe it to the Government to give my reaction to the sad happenings in the country. If the Government think that as a prisoner I have no right to address such communications, they have but to say so and I will not repeat the mistake.

I am,
Yours, &c.,
M. K. GANDHI.

NOTE:—An oral acknowledgement was sent to this letter.

II.—THE "FAST" CORRESPONDENCE.

(4)

New Year's Eve, 1942.

[Personal.]

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

This is a very personal letter. Contrary to the biblical injunction. I have allowed many suns to set on a quarrel I have harboured against you, but must not allow the old year to expire without disburdening myself of what is rankling in my breast against you. I had thought we were friends and should still love to think so. However what has happened since the 9th of August last makes me wonder whether you still regard me as a friend. I have perhaps not come in such close touch with any other occupant of your *Gadi* as with you.

Your arrest of me, the communiqué you issued thereafter, your reply to Rajaji and the reasons given therefor, Mr. Amery's attack on me and much else I can catalogue go to show that at some stage or other you must have suspected my *bona fides*. Mention of other Congressmen in the same connection is by the way. I seem to be the *fons et origo* of all the evil imputed to the Congress. If I have not ceased to be your friend. Why did you not, before taking drastic action, send for me, tell me of your suspicions and make yourself sure of your facts? I am quite capable of seeing myself as others see me, but in this case I have failed hopelessly. I find that all the statements made about me in Government quarters in this connection contain palpable departures from truth, I have so much fallen from grace that I could not establish contact with a dying friend; I mean Prof. Bhansali who is fasting in regard to the Chimur affair; and I am expected to condemn the so-called violence of some people reputed to be Congressmen, although I have no data for such condemnation save the heavily censored reports of newspapers. I must own that I thoroughly distrust these reports. I could write much more but I must not lengthen my tale of woe. I am sure that what I have said is enough to enable you to fill in details.

You know I returned to India from South Africa at the end of 1914 with a mission which came to me in 1906, namely, to spread truth and non-violence among mankind in the place of violence and falsehood in all walks of life. The law of *Satyagraha* knows no defeat. Prison is one of the many ways of spreading the message, but it has its limits. You have placed me in a palace where every reasonable creature comfort is ensured. I have freely partaken of the latter purely as a matter of duty, never as a pleasure, in the hope that some day those that have the power will realise that they have wronged innocent men. I had given myself six months. The period is drawing to a close, so is my patience. The law of *Satyagraha* as I know it prescribes a remedy in such moments of trial. In a sentence it is "crucify the flesh by fasting". That same law forbids its use except as a last resort. I do not want to use it if I can avoid it. This is the way to avoid it, convince me of my error or errors and I shall make ample amends. You can send for me or send someone who knows your mind and can carry conviction. There are many other ways if you have the will. May I expect an early reply? May the New Year bring peace to us all.

I am,
Your sincere friend,
M. K. GANDHI.

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(5)

January 13th, 1943.

[Personal.]

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Thank you for your personal letter of December 31st, which I have just received. I fully accept its personal character, and I welcome its frankness. And my reply will be, as you would wish it to be, as frank and as entirely personal as your letter itself.

2. I was glad to have your letter, for, to be as open with you as our previous relations justify, I have been profoundly depressed during recent months first by the policy that was adopted by the Congress in August, secondly, because while that policy gave rise, as it was obvious it must, throughout the country to violence and crime (I say nothing of the risks to India from outside aggression) no word of condemnation for that violence and crime should have come from you, or from the Working Committee. When you were first at Poona I knew that you were not receiving newspapers, and I accepted that as explaining your silence. When arrangements were made that you and the Working Committee should have such newspapers as you desired I felt certain that the details those newspapers contained of what was happening would shock and distress you as much as it has us all, and that you would be anxious to make your condemnation of it categorical and widely known. But that was not the case; and it has been a real disappointment to me, all the more when I think of these murders, the burning alive of police officials, the wrecking of trains, the destruction of property, the misleading of these young students, which has done so much harm to India's good name, and to the Congress Party. You may take it from me that the newspaper accounts you mention are well founded—I only wish they were not, for the story is a bad one. I well know the immense weight of your great authority in the Congress movement and with the Party and those who follow its lead, and I wish I could feel, again speaking very frankly, that a heavy responsibility did not rest on you. (And unhappily, while the initial responsibility rests with the leaders, others have to bear the consequences, whether as lawbreakers, with the results that that involves, or as the victims).

3. But if I am right in reading your letter to mean that in the light of what has happened you wish now to retrace your steps and dissociate yourself from the policy of last summer, you have only to let me know and I will at once consider the matter further. And if I have failed to understand your object, you must not hesitate to let me know without delay in what respect I have done so, and tell me what positive suggestion you wish to put to me. You know me well enough after these many years to believe that I shall be only too concerned to read with the same close attention as ever any message which I receive from you, to give it the fullest weight, and to approach it with the deepest anxiety to understand your feeling and your motives.

Yours sincerely,

LINLITHGOW.

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(6)

January 19th, 1943.

[Personal.]

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I received your kind letter of 13th instant yesterday at 2-30 P.M. I had almost despaired of ever hearing from you. Please excuse my impatience.

Your letter gladdens me to find that I have not lost caste with you.

My letter of 31st December was a growl against you. Yours is a counter-growl. It means that you maintain that you were right in arresting me and you were sorry for the omissions of which, in your opinion, I was guilty.

The inference you draw from my letter is, I am afraid, not correct. I have re-read your letter in the light of your interpretation, but have failed to find your meaning in it. I wanted to fast and should still want to if nothing comes out of our correspondence and I have to be a helpless witness to what is going on in the country, including the privations of the millions owing to the universal scarcity stalking the land.

If I do not accept your interpretation of my letter, you want me to make a positive suggestion. This I might be able to do, only if you put me among the members of the Working Committee of the Congress.

If I could be convinced of my error or worse, of which you are evidently, I should need to consult nobody, so far as my own action is concerned, to make a full and open confession and make ample amends. But I have not any conviction of error. I wonder if you saw my letter to the Secretary to the

Government of India of 21st September 1942. I adhere to what I have said in it and in my letter to you of 14th August 1942.

Of course I deplore the happenings which have taken place since 9th August last. But have I not laid the whole blame for them at the door of the Government of India? Moreover, I could not express any opinion on events which I cannot influence or control and of which I have but a one-sided account. You are bound *primâ facie* to accept the accuracy of reports that may be placed before you by your departmental heads. But you will not expect me to do so. Such reports have before now often proved fallible. It was for that reason that, in my letter of 31st December, I pleaded with you to convince me of the correctness of the information on which your conviction was based. You will, perhaps, appreciate my fundamental difficulty in making the statement you have expected me to make.

This however I can say from the house-top, that I am as confirmed a believer in non-violence as I have ever been. You may not know that any violence on the part of Congress workers, I have condemned openly and unequivocally. I have even done public penance more than once. I must not weary you with examples. The point I wish to make is that on every such occasion I was a free man.

This time the retracing, as I have submitted, lies with the Government. You will forgive me for expressing an opinion challenging yours. I am certain that nothing but good would have resulted if you had stayed your hand and granted me the interview, which I had announced on the night of the 8th August I was to seek. But that was not to be.

Here, may I remind you that the Government of India have before now owned their mistakes, as for instance, in the Punjab when the late General Dyer was condemned, in the United Provinces when a corner of a mosque in Cawnpore was restored and in Bengal when the Partition was annulled? All these things were done in spite of great and previous mob violence.

To sum up—

(1) If you want me to act singly, convince me that I was wrong and I will make ample amends.

(2) If you want me to make any proposal on behalf of the Congress, you should put me among the Congress Working Committee members. I do plead with you to make up your mind to end the *impasse*.

If I am obscure or have not answered your letter fully please point out the omissions and I shall make an attempt to give you satisfaction.

I have no mental reservation.

I find that my letters to you are sent through the Government of Bombay. This procedure must involve some loss of time. As time is of the essence in this matter, perhaps you will issue instructions that my letters to you may be sent directly by the Superintendent of this Camp.

I am,
Your sincere friend,
M. K. GANDHI.

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(7)

January 25th, 1943.

[Personal.]

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Many thanks for your personal letter of the 19th January, which I have just received, and which I need not say I have read with close care and attention. But I am still, I fear, rather in the dark. I made clear to you in my last letter that, however reluctantly, the course of events, and my familiarity with what has been taking place, has left me no choice but to regard the Congress movement, and you as its authorised and fully empowered spokesman at the time of the decision of last August, as responsible for the sad campaign of violence and crime, and revolutionary activity which has done so much harm, and so much injury to India's credit, since last August. I note what you say about non-violence. I am very glad to read your unequivocal condemnation of

violence, and I am well aware of the importance which you have given to that article of your creed in the past. But the events of these last months, and even the events that are happening today, show that it has not met with the full support of certain at any rate of your followers, and the mere fact that they may have fallen short of an ideal which you have advocated is no answer to the relations of those who have lost their lives, and to those themselves who have lost their property or suffered severe injury as a result of violent activities on the part of Congress and its supporters. And I cannot I fear accept as an answer your suggestion that "the whole blame" has been laid by you yourself at the door of the Government of India. We are dealing with facts in this matter, and they have to be faced. And while, as I made clear in my last letter, I am very anxious to have from you anything that you may have to say or any specific proposition that you may have to make, the position remains that it is not the Government of India, but Congress and yourself that are on their justification in this matter.

2. If therefore you are anxious to inform me that you repudiate or dissociate yourself from the resolution of the 9th August and the policy which that resolution represents, and if you can give me appropriate assurances as regards the future, I shall, I need not say, be very ready to consider the matter further. It is of course very necessary to be clear on that point, and you will not, I know, take it amiss that I should make that clear in the plainest possible words.

3. I will ask the Governor of Bombay to arrange that any communication from you should be sent through him, which will I trust reduce delay in its transmission.

Yours sincerely,

LINLITHGOW.

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(8)

January 29th, 1943.

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I must thank you warmly for your prompt reply to my letter of 19th instant. I wish I could agree with you that your letter is clear. I am sure you do not wish to imply by clearness simply that you hold a particular opinion strongly. I have pleaded and would continue to plead till the last breath, that you should at least make an attempt to convince me of the validity of the opinion you hold that the August resolution of the Congress is responsible for the popular violence that broke out on 9th August last and after, even though it broke out after the wholesale arrest of principal Congress workers. Was not the drastic and unwarranted action of the Government responsible for the reported violence?

You have not even said what part of the August resolution is bad or offensive in your opinion. That resolution is in no way a retraction by the Congress of its policy of non-violence. It is definitely against Fascism in every shape or form. It tenders co-operation in war effort under circumstances which alone can make effective and nation-wide co-operation possible. Is all this open to reproach? Objection may be raised to that clause of the resolution which contemplated civil disobedience. But that by itself cannot constitute an objection since the principle of civil disobedience is impliedly conceded in what is known as the "Gandhi-Irwin Pact". Even that civil disobedience was not to be started before knowing the result of the meeting for which I was to seek from you an appointment.

Then, take the unproved and in my opinion unprovable charges hurled against the Congress and me by so responsible a Minister as the Secretary of State for India.

Surely I can say with safety that it is for the Government to justify their action by solid evidence not by mere *ipse dixit*.

But you throw in my face the facts of murders by persons reputed to be Congressmen. I see the fact of the murders as clearly, I hope, as you do. My answer is that the Government goaded the people to the point of madness.

They started leonine violence in the shape of the arrests already referred to. That violence is not any the less so, because it is organised on a scale so gigantic that it displaces the Mosaic law of tooth for tooth by that of ten thousand for one—not to mention the corollary of the Mosaic law, *i.e.*, of non-resistance as enunciated by Jesus Christ. I cannot interpret in any other manner the repressive measures of the all-powerful Government of India.

Add to this tale of woe the privations of the poor millions due to India-wide scarcity which I cannot help thinking might have been largely mitigated, if not altogether prevented, had there been a *bonâ fide* national government responsible to a popularly elected assembly.

If then I cannot get soothing balm for my pain, I must resort to the law prescribed for *Satyagrahis*, namely, a fast according to capacity. I must commence after the early morning breakfast of the 9th February a fast for 21 days ending on the morning of the 2nd March. Usually, during my fasts, I take water with the addition of salts. But nowadays my system refuses water. This time therefore, I propose to add juices of citrus fruit to make water drinkable. For, my wish is not to fast unto death, but to survive the ordeal, if God so wills. This fast can be ended sooner by the Government giving the needed relief.

I am not marking this letter personal as I did the two previous ones. They were in no way confidential. They were a mere personal appeal.

I am,

Your sincere friend,

M. K. GANDHI.

P. S.—The following was inadvertently omitted.

The Government have evidently ignored or overlooked the very material fact that the Congress by its August resolution asked nothing for itself. All its demands were for the whole people. As you should be aware, the Congress was willing and prepared for the Government inviting Q.-A.-Jinnah to form a national government subject to such agreed adjustments as may be necessary for the duration of the war, such Government being responsible to a duly elected assembly. Being isolated from the Working Committee except Shrimati Sarojini Devi, I do not know its present mind. But the committee is not likely to have changed its mind.

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(9)

February 5th, 1943.

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Many thanks for your letter of 29th January which I have just received. I have read it, as always, with great care and with every anxiety to follow your mind and to do full justice to your argument. But I fear that my view of the responsibility of Congress and of yourself personally for the lamentable disorders of last autumn remains unchanged.

2. In my last letter I said that my knowledge of the facts left me no choice but to regard the Congress movement, and you as its authorised and fully empowered leader at the time of the decision of last August, as responsible for the campaign of violence and crime that subsequently broke out. In reply you have reiterated your request that I should attempt to convince you that my opinion is correct. I would readily have responded earlier to that request were it not that your letters gave no indication, such as I should have been entitled to expect, that you sought the information with an open mind. In each of them you have expressed profound distrust of the published reports of the recent happenings, although in your last letter, on the basis of the same information, you have not hesitated to lay the whole blame for them on the Government of India. In the same letter you have stated that I cannot expect you to accept the accuracy of the official reports on which I rely. It is not therefore clear to me how you expect or even desire me to convince you of anything. But in fact, the Government of India have never made any secret of

their reasons for holding the Congress and its leaders responsible for the deplorable acts of violence, sabotage and terrorism that have occurred since the Congress Resolution of the 8th August declared a "mass struggle" in support of its demands, appointed you as its leader and authorised all Congressmen to act for themselves in the event of interference with the leadership of the movement. A body which passes a resolution in such terms is hardly entitled to disclaim responsibility for any events that followed it. There is evidence that you and your friends expected this policy to lead to violence; and that you were prepared to condone it, and that the violence that ensued formed part of a concerted plan, conceived long before the arrest of Congress leaders. The general nature of the case against the Congress has been publicly stated by the Home Member in his speech in the Central Legislative Assembly on the 15th September last, and if you need further information I would refer you to it. I enclose a complete copy in case the press versions that you must have seen were not sufficient. I need only add that all the mass of evidence that has since come to light has confirmed the conclusions then reached. I have ample information that the campaign of sabotage has been conducted under secret instructions, circulated in the name of the All-India Congress Committee, that well-known Congressmen have organised and freely taken part in acts of violence and murder; and that even now an underground Congress organisation exists in which, among others, the wife of a member of the Congress Working Committee plays a prominent part, and which is actively engaged in planning the bomb outrages and other acts of terrorism that have disgusted the whole country. If we do not act on all this information or make it publicly known, it is because the time is not yet ripe; but you may rest assured that the charges against the Congress will have to be met sooner or later and it will then be for you and your colleagues to clear yourselves before the world if you can. And if in the meanwhile you yourself, by any action such as you now appear to be contemplating, attempt to find an easy way out, the judgment will go against you by default.

3. I have read with some surprise your statement that the principle of civil disobedience is implicitly conceded in the Delhi Settlement of the 5th March 1931, which you refer to as the "Gandhi-Irwin Pact". I have again looked at that document. Its basis was that civil disobedience would be "effectively discontinued" and that certain "reciprocal action" would be taken by Government. It was inherent in such a document that it should take notice of the existence of civil disobedience. But I can find nothing in it to suggest that civil disobedience was recognised as being in any circumstances legitimate. And I cannot make it too plain that it is not so regarded by my Government.

4. To accept the point of view which you put forward would be to concede that the authorised government of the country, on which lies the responsibility for maintaining peace and good order, should allow subversive and revolutionary movements described by you yourself as open rebellion, to take place unchallenged; that they should allow preparations for violence, for the interruption of communications, for attacks on innocent persons, for the murder of police officers and others to proceed unchecked. My Government and I are open indeed to the charge that we should have taken drastic action at an earlier stage against you and against the Congress leaders. But my anxiety and that of my Government has throughout been to give you, and to give the Congress organisation, every possible opportunity to withdraw from the position which you have decided to take up. Your statements of last June and July, the original resolution of the Working Committee of the 14th July, and your declaration on the same day that there was no room left for negotiation and that after all it was an open rebellion, are all of them grave and significant, even without your final exhortation to "do or die". But with a patience that was perhaps misplaced, it was decided to wait until the resolution of the All-India Congress Committee made it clear that there could be no further toleration of the Congress attitude if Government was to discharge its responsibility to the people of India.

5. Let me in conclusion say how greatly I regret, having regard to your health and your age, the decision that you tell me that you now have it in mind

to take. I hope and pray that wiser counsels may yet prevail with you. But the decision whether or not to undertake a fast with its attendant risks is clearly one that must be taken by you alone, and the responsibility for which and for its consequences must rest on you alone. I trust sincerely that in the light of what I have said you may think better of your resolution; and I would welcome a decision on your part to think better of it, not only because of my own natural reluctance to see you wilfully risk your life, but because I regard the use of a fast for political purposes as a form of political blackmail (*himsa*) for which there can be no moral justification, and understood from your own previous writings that this was also your view.

Yours sincerely,
LINLITHGOW.

(10)

February 7th, 1943.

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I have to thank you for your long reply, dated the 5th instant, to my letter of 29th January last. I would take your last point first, namely, the contemplated fast which begins on 9th instant. Your letter, from a *Satyagrahi's* standpoint, is an invitation to fast. No doubt the responsibility for the step, and its consequences, will be solely mine. You have allowed an expression to slip from your pen for which I was unprepared. In the concluding sentence of the second paragraph you describe the step as an attempt "to find an easy way out". That you, as a friend, can impute such a base and cowardly motive to me passes comprehension. You have also described it as "a form of political blackmail". And you quote my previous writings on the subject against me. I abide by my writings. I hold that there is nothing inconsistent in them with the contemplated step. I wonder whether you have yourself read those writings.

I do claim that I have approached you with an open mind when I asked you to convince me of my error. "Profound distrust" of the published reports is in no way inconsistent with my having an open mind.

You say that there is evidence that I—I leave my friends out for the moment—"expected this policy to lead to violence", that I was "prepared to condone it", and that "the violence that ensued formed part of a concerted plan conceived long before the arrest of Congress leaders". I have seen no evidence in support of such a serious charge. You admit that part of the evidence has yet to be published. The speech of the Home Member, of which you have favoured me with a copy, may be taken as the opening speech of the prosecution counsel and nothing more. It contains unsupported imputations against Congressmen. Of course he has described the violent outburst in graphic language. But he has not said why it took place when it did. You have condemned men and women before trying them and hearing their defence. Surely there is nothing wrong in my asking you to show me the evidence on which you hold them guilty. What you say in your letter carries no conviction. Proof should correspond to the canons of English jurisprudence.

If the wife of a member of the Working Committee is actively engaged in "planning the bomb outrages and other acts of terrorism", she should be tried before a court of law and punished if found guilty. The lady you refer to could only have done the things attributed to her after the wholesale arrests of 9th August last, which I have dared to describe as leonine violence.

You say that the time is not yet ripe to publish the charges against the Congress. Have you ever thought of the possibility of their being found baseless when they are put before an impartial Tribunal? Or that some of the condemned persons might have died in the meanwhile, or that some of the evidence that the living can produce might become unavailable?

I reiterate the statement that the principle of civil disobedience is implicitly conceded in the Settlement of 5th March 1931 arrived at between the then Viceroy on behalf of the Government of India and myself on behalf of the Congress. I hope you know that the principal Congressmen were discharged

before that Settlement was even thought of. Certain reparations were made to Congressmen under that Settlement. Civil disobedience was discontinued only on conditions being fulfilled by the Government. That by itself was, in my opinion, an acknowledgment of its legitimacy, of course under given circumstances. It therefore seems somewhat strange to find you maintain that civil disobedience "cannot be recognised as being in any circumstances legitimate" by your government. You ignore the practice of the British Government which has recognised this legitimacy under the name of "passive resistance".

Lastly you read into my letters a meaning which is wholly inconsistent with my declaration; in one of them, of adherence to unadulterated non-violence. For, you say in your letter under reply that "acceptance of my point of view would be to concede that the authorised government of the country on which lies the responsibility for maintaining peace and good order, should allow movements to take place that would admit preparations for violence, interruption of communications, for attacks on innocent persons, for murders of police officers and others to proceed unchecked". I must be a strange friend of yours whom you believe to be capable of asking for recognition of such things as lawful.

I have not attempted an exhaustive reply to the views and statements attributed to me. This is not the place nor the time for such a reply. I have only picked out those things which in my opinion demanded an immediate answer. You have left me no loophole for escaping the ordeal I have set before myself. I begin it on the 9th instant with the clearest possible conscience. Despite your description of it as "a form of political blackmail", it is on my part meant to be an appeal to the Higest Tribunal for justice which I have failed to secure from you. If I do not survive the ordeal, I shall go to the Judgment Seat with the fullest faith in my innocence. Posterity will judge between you as representative of an all-powerful Government and me as a humble man who has tried to serve his country and humanity through it.

My last letter was written against time, and therefore a material paragraph went in as postscript. I now send herewith a fair copy typed by Pearay Lal who has taken Mahadeo Desai's place. You will find the postscript paragraph restored to the place where it should have been.

I am,
Your sincere friend,
M. K. GANDHI.

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(11)

HOME DEPARTMENT,
February 7th, 1943.

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

The Government of India have been informed by His Excellency the Viceroy of your intention as communicated to him of undertaking a fast for 21 days in certain circumstances. They have carefully considered the position, and the conclusions that they have reached in the light of such consideration are set out in the statement of which a copy is enclosed, which they would propose, in the event of your maintaining your present intention, to release in due course to the press.

2. The Government of India, as you will see from their statement, would be very reluctant to see you fast, and I am instructed to inform you that, as the statement makes clear, they would propose that, should you persist in your intention, you will be set at liberty for the purpose, and for the duration, of your fast as from the time of its commencement. During the period of your fast there will be no objection to your proceeding where you wish, though the Government of India trust that you will be able to arrange for your accommodation away from the Aga Khan's Palace.

3. Should you for any reason find yourself unable to take advantage of these arrangements, a decision which the Government of India would greatly regret, they will of course suitably amend the statement of which a copy is now enclosed before it issues. But they wish me to repeat, with all earnestness, their anxiety and their hope that the considerations which have carried so much

weight with them will equally carry weight with you, and that you will not pursue your present tentative proposal. In that event, no occasion will of course arise for the issue of any statement of any kind.

Yours sincerely,
R. TOTTENHAM.
Additional Secretary to the Government of India.

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(12)

February 8th, 1943.

DEAR SIR RICHARD,

I have very carefully studied your letter. I am sorry to say that there is nothing in the correspondence which has taken place between His Excellency and myself or your letter, to warrant a recalling of my intention to fast. I have mentioned in my letters to His Excellency the conditions which can induce prevention or suspension of the step.

If the temporary release is offered for my convenience I do not need it. I shall be quite content to take my fast as a detenu or prisoner. If it is for the convenience of the Government, I am sorry I am unable to suit them, much as I should like to do so. I can say this much, that I, as a prisoner, shall avoid, as far as is humanly possible, every cause of inconvenience to the Government save what is inherent in the fast itself. The impending fast has not been conceived to be taken as a free man. Circumstances may arise, as they have done before now, when I may have to fast as a free man. If therefore I am released, there will be no fast in terms of my correspondence above-mentioned. I shall have to survey the situation *de novo* and decide what I should do. I have no desire to be released under false pretences. In spite of all that has been said against me, I hope not to belie the vow of truth and non-violence which alone makes life liveable for me. I say this, if it is only for my own satisfaction. It does me good to reiterate openly my faith, when outer darkness surrounds me, as it does just now.

I must not hustle the Government into a decision on this letter. I understand that your letter has been dictated through the telephone. In order to give the Government enough time, I shall suspend the fast, if necessary, to Wednesday next, 10th instant.

So far as the statement proposed to be issued by the Government is concerned, and of which you have favoured me with a copy, I can have no opinion. But if I might have, I must say that it does me an injustice. The proper course would be to publish the full correspondence and let the public judge for themselves.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI.

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(13)

HOME DEPARTMENT,
February 9th, 1943.

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I am instructed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 8th February 1943, which has been laid before the Governor-General in Council. The Government of India note your decision with great regret. Their position remains the same, that is to say they are ready to set you at liberty for the purpose and duration of your fast. But if you are not prepared to take advantage of that fact, and if you fast while in detention, you will do so solely on your own responsibility and at your own risk. In that event you will be at liberty to have your own medical attendants, and also to receive visits from friends with the permission of Government during its period. Suitable drafting alterations will be made in the statement which the Government of India would, in that event, issue to the press.

Yours sincerely,
R. TOTTENHAM.

III.—THE MR. JINNAH CORRESPONDENCE.

(14)

May 4th, 1943.

To

The Secretary,
Government of India, Home Department.

SIR,

Will you please forward the enclosed to Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah?

I am,
Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI.

(15)

May 4th, 1943.

DEAR QUAID-E-AZAM,

When some time after my incarceration, the Government asked me for a list of newspapers I would like to have, I included the *Dawn* in my list. I have been receiving it with more or less regularity. Whenever it comes to me, I read it carefully. I have followed the proceedings of the League as reported in the *Dawn* columns. I noted your invitation to me to write to you. Hence this letter.

I welcome your invitation. I suggest our meeting face to face rather than talking through correspondence. But I am in your hands.

I hope that this letter will be sent to you and, if you agree to my proposal, that the Government will let you visit me.

One thing I had better mention. There seems to be an "if" about your invitation. Do you say I should write only if I have changed my heart? God alone knows men's hearts. I would like you to take me as I am.

Why should not both you and I approach the great question of communal unity as men determined on finding a common solution and work together to make our solution acceptable to all who are concerned with it or are interested in it?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI.

To

Quaid-e-Azam M. A. Jinnah,
Mount Pleasant Road, Bombay.

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(16)

HOME DEPARTMENT,
May 24th, 1943.

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

In reply to your letter of the 4th May in which you have requested the Government of India to forward a letter of the same date addressed by you to Mr. Jinnah, I am to inform you that the Government of India have decided that your letter cannot be forwarded. This decision is in accordance with the restrictions which as you are aware have been placed on your correspondence and interviews while you are under detention. Government propose shortly to issue a communiqué, of which I enclose an advance copy, stating the fact that the letter has been withheld and the reasons therefor.

Yours sincerely,
R. TOTTENHAM.

Press Communiqué.

The Government of India have received a request from Mr. Gandhi to forward a short letter from himself to Mr. Jinnah expressing a wish to meet him.

In accordance with their known policy in regard to correspondence or interviews with Mr. Gandhi the Government of India have decided that this letter cannot be forwarded and have so informed Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Jinnah. They are not prepared to give facilities for political correspondence or contact to a person detained for promoting an illegal mass movement which he has not disavowed and thus gravely embarrassing India's war effort at a critical time. It rests with Mr. Gandhi to satisfy the Government of India that he can safely be allowed once more to participate in the public affairs of the country, and until he does so, the disabilities from which he suffers, are of his own choice.

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(17)

May 27th, 1943.

DEAR SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM,

I received last evening your letter of the 24th instant refusing my request to forward my letter addressed to Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah. I wrote only yesterday to the Superintendent of this camp asking him kindly to inquire whether my letter to Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah, and later, one dated the 15th instant, to Right Honourable Lord Samuel had been forwarded to the respective addressees.

I am sorry for the Government's decision. For my letter to the Quaid-e-Azam was sent in reply to his public invitation to me to write to him and I was especially encouraged to do so because his language had led me to think that, if I wrote to him, my letter would be forwarded to him. The public too are anxious that the Quaid-e-Azam and I should meet or at least establish contact. I have always been anxious to meet the Quaid-e-Azam, if per chance we could devise some solution of the communal tangle which might be generally acceptable. Therefore the disability in the present instance is much more that of the public than mine. As a *Satyagrahi* I may not regard as disabilities the restrictions which the Government have imposed upon me. As the Government are aware, I have denied myself even the pleasure of writing to my relatives as I am not allowed to perform the service of writing to my co-workers who are in a sense more to me than my relatives.

The advance copy of the contemplated communiqué with which you have considerately favoured me requires emendation in more places than one. For, as it stands, it does not square with facts.

As to the disavowal referred to in the proposed communiqué, the Government are aware that I regard the non-violent mass movement, for the launching of which the Congress gave me authority on the 8th of August last, as perfectly legitimate and in the interest both of the Government and the public. As it is, the Government left me no time to start the movement. Therefore how could a movement, which was never started, embarrass "India's" war effort? If then, there was any embarrassment by reason of the popular resentment of the Government's action in resorting to the wholesale arrests of principal Congressmen, the responsibility was solely that of the Government. The mass movement, as the resolution sanctioning it said in so many words, was sanctioned in order to promote India-wide effort on behalf of the Allied cause, including the causes of Russia and China, whose danger was very great in August last and from which, in my opinion, they are by no means free even now. I hope the Government will not feel offended when I say that all the war effort that is being put forth in India is not India's but the alien Government's. I submit that if the Government had complied with the request of the Congress as embodied in its August resolution, there would have been a mass effort without parallel for winning the battle for human freedom and ridding the world of the menace that Fascism, Nazism, Japanism and Imperialism are. I may be wholly wrong; anyway this is my deliberate and honest opinion.

In order to make the communiqué accord with facts, I suggest the following alteration in the first paragraph: after "Mr. Jinnah" add "in response to his public invitation to Mr. Gandhi to write to him, stating that he (Mr. Gandhi) would be willing to correspond with or meet him according as he wished".

I hope that the remaining portion of the communiqué too will be suitably amended in the light of my submission.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI.

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(18)

May 28th, 1943.

DEAR SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM,

I handed my reply to your letter of the 24th instant, at about one o'clock yesterday, to the Superintendent. I hurried the writing and the despatch in the hope of my letter reaching you before the publication of the communiqué. I was therefore astonished and grieved to find the communiqué in the papers received in the afternoon, and Reuter's report of the reactions upon it in London. Evidently there was no meaning in an advance copy of the communiqué being sent to me. I regard the communiqué not only to be inconsistent with facts, but unfair to me. The only way partial redress can be given to me is the publication of the correspondence between us. I therefore request that it may be published.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI.

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(19)

HOME DEPARTMENT,
June 4th, 1943.

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I am directed to acknowledge your letter to Sir Richard Tottenham, dated 27th May 1943, and to say that the Government of India have considered it but see no reason to modify their communiqué already published.

Yours sincerely,
E. CONRAN-SMITH,
Secretary to the Government of India.

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(20)

HOME DEPARTMENT,
June 8th, 1943.

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

In reply to your letter to Sir Richard Tottenham, dated 28th May 1943, I am directed to say that the advance copy of the communiqué stating Government's reason for not forwarding your letter to Mr. Jinnah was furnished to you for your personal information and that Government regret they see no reason to publish the correspondence.

Yours sincerely,
E. CONRAN-SMITH.

IV.—CORRESPONDENCE WITH HOME MEMBER.

(21)

May 21st, 1943.

DEAR SIR REGINALD MAXWELL,

It was only on the 10th instant that I read your speech delivered in the Legislative Assembly on the 15th February last on the adjournment motion about my fast. I saw at once that it demanded a reply. I wish I had read it earlier.

I observe that you are angry, or at least were at the time you delivered your speech. I cannot in any other way account for your palpable inaccuracies. This letter is an endeavour to show them. It is written to you, not as an official, but as man to man. The first thought that came to me was that your speech was a deliberate distortion of facts. But I quickly revised it. So long as there was a favourable construction possible to put upon your language, the unfavourable had to be rejected. I must assume therefore that what appeared to me to be distortions were not deliberate.

You have said that "the correspondence that led to the fast is there for anyone to interpret as he chooses", yet you have straightaway told your audience that "it can perhaps be read in the light of the following facts". Did you leave them the choice?

I now take your "facts" seriatim:

1. "When the Congress Party passed their resolution of August 8th, a Japanese attack on this country was thought to be likely".

You seem to have conveyed the meaning that the thought was that of the Congress and that it was gratuitous. The fact is that the Government gave currency to the thought and emphasised it by action which even seemed ludicrous.

2. "By demanding the withdrawal of British power from India and by placing the Congress in open opposition to it the Congress Party might be thought to have hoped for some advantage to themselves if the Japanese attack succeeded".

Now this is not a fact but your opinion wholly contrary to facts. Congressmen never hoped for, nor desired any advantage from Japanese success, on the contrary, they dreaded it and that dread inspired the desire for the immediate end of British rule. All this is crystal clear from the resolution of the All-India Congress Committee (8th August, 1942) and my writings.

3. "Today, six months after, the Japanese danger has, at any rate for the time being, receded and there is little immediate hope from that quarter".

This again is your opinion; mine is that the Japanese danger has not receded. It still stares India in the face. Your fling that "there is little immediate hope from that quarter" should be withdrawn unless you think and prove that the resolution and my writings adverted to in the previous paragraph did not mean what they said.

4. "The movement initiated by the Congress has been decisively defeated."

I must combat this statement. *Satyagraha* knows no defeat. It flourishes on blows the hardest imaginable. But I need not go to that bower for comfort. I learnt in schools established by the British Government in India that "Freedom's battle once begun" is "bequeathed from bleeding sire to son". It is of little moment when the goal is reached so long as effort is not relaxed. The dawn came with the establishment of the Congress 60 years ago. Sixth of April, 1919, on which All-India *Satyagraha* began, saw a spontaneous awakening from one end of India to the other. You can certainly derive comfort, if you like, from the fact that the immediate objective of the movement was not gained as some Congressmen had expected. But that is no criterion of "decisive" or any "defeat". It ill becomes one belonging to a race which owns no defeat to deduce defeat of a popular movement from the suppression of popular exuberance, may be not always wise, by a frightful exhibition of power.

5. "Now therefore it is the object of the Congress Party to rehabilitate themselves and regain if they can the credit they have lost".

Surely, your own experience should correct this opinion. You know, as well as I do, that every attempt at suppression of the Congress has given it greater prestige and popularity. This the latest attempt at suppression is not likely to lead a contrary result. Hence the questions of "lost credit" and "rehabilitation" simply do not arise.

6. "Thus they are now concerned to disclaim responsibility for the consequences that followed their decision. The point is taken up by Mr. Gandhi in his correspondence with the Viceroy. The awkward facts are now disowned as unproved".

"They" here can only mean "me". For, throughout your speech I was the target. "Now" means at the time of my fast, I remind you that I disclaimed responsibility on 14th August last when I wrote to His Excellency the Viceroy. In that same letter I laid it on the Government who by their wholesale arrests of 9th August provoked the people to the point of madness. "The awkward facts" are not awkward for me when the responsibility rests on the Government and what you put forward as "facts" are only one-sided allegations awaiting proof.

7. "Mr. Gandhi takes up his stand: 'Surely, I can say with safety that it is for the Government to justify their action by solid evidence'.

To whom are they to justify themselves?

Sardar Sant Singh: Before an impartial enquiry committee".

Was not Sardar Sant Singh's answer a proper answer? How nice it would have been if you had not put in the interjection! For, have not the Government of India been obliged before now to justify their acts by appointing inquiry committees, as for instance, after the Jallinwala Bagh massacre?

8. But you proceed, "Elsewhere in his letters Mr. Gandhi makes this clear. He says, 'Convince me that I was wrong and I will make ample amends'. In the alternative he asks, 'If you want me to make any proposal on behalf of the Congress, you should put me among the Working Committee members'. So far as can be seen, these were the demands when he conceived his fast. There is no other solid demand made".

Here there is a double wrong done to me. You have ignored the fact that my letters were written to one whom I considered to be a friend. You have further ignored the fact that the Viceroy in his letter had asked me to make clear proposals. If you had borne these two facts in mind, you would not have wronged me as you have done. But let me come to the ninth count of your indictment, and it will be clear to you what I mean.

9. "But now, fresh light emerges. Government without granting any of his demands informed Mr. Gandhi that they would release him for the purpose and for the duration of the fast in order to make it clear they disclaimed responsibility for the consequences. On that Mr. Gandhi replied that if he was released, he would at once abandon the fast, and that he had conceived the fast only as a prisoner. Thus, if he were released, the objects for which he declared his fast, although still unfulfilled, would recede into the background. As a free man, he would neither demand these objects nor fast. Interpreted in this way, his fast would seem to amount to little more than a demand for release".

Together with the letter containing the offer of release, a copy of the draft communiqué that was to be issued by the Government was delivered to me. It did not say that the offer was made in order "to make it clear that the Government disclaimed responsibility for the consequences". If I had seen that offending sentence I would have sent a simple refusal. In my innocence, I put a fair meaning on the offer and in my reply I argued why I could not accept it. And, according to my wont, in order that the Government may not be misled in any shape or form, I told them how the fast was conceived and why it could not be taken by me as a free man. I went out of my way even to postpone,

for the convenience of the Government, the commencement of the fast by a day. Mr. Irwin who had brought the offer and the draft communiqué appreciated the courtesy. Why was this reply of mine withheld from the public at the time the revised communiqué was issued, and why was an unwarranted interpretation given instead? Was not my letter a material document?

Now for the second wrong. You say that if I were released my objects for which I had declared the fast would recede into the background, and even gratuitously suggest that as a free man I would neither demand these objects nor fast. As a free man I could and would have carried on an agitation for an impartial public inquiry into the charges brought against Congressmen and me. I would also have asked for permission to see the imprisoned Congressmen. Assume that my agitation had failed to make any impression on the Government, I might then have fasted. All this, if you were not labouring under intense irritation, you could have plainly seen from my letter, supported as you would have been by my past record. Instead, you have deduced a meaning, which according to the simple rules of construction you had no right to deduce. Again, as a free man I would have had the opportunity of examining the tales of destruction said to have been wrought by Congressmen and even by non-Congressmen. And if I had found that they had committed wanton acts of murder, then also I might have fasted as I have done before now. You should thus see that the demands made in my letter to His Excellency the Viceroy would not have receded into the background, if I had been released, for they could have been pressed otherwise than by the fast, and that the fast had not the remotest connection with any desire for release. Moreover, imprisonment is never irksome to a *Satyagrahi*. For him a prison is a gateway of Liberty.

10. "I could quote several Resolutions of the Congress Working Committee against him.....Mr. Gandhi himself took up the subject in the *Harijan*, dated 19th August 1939. There he says: 'Hunger-strike has positively become a plague' ".

11. "Or the ethics of hunger-striking, Mr. Gandhi had something to say in the *Harijan* of 20th May 1939, after his Rajkot fast: 'I now see that it was tainted by *himsa*'. Further on he remarks, 'This was not the way of *ahimsa* or conversion' ".

My views quoted by you have not undergone the slightest change. If you had read the quotations without passion, it would have prevented you from putting upon my letter the construction you have.

I am sorry to have to say that you have wholly misread my article. Fortunately I happen to have A. Hingorani's collection of my writings "To the Princes and their Peoples". I quote from the *Harijan* article referred to by you: "At the end of my fast I had permitted myself to say that it had succeeded as no previous fast had done. I now see that it was tainted with *himsa*. In taking the fast I sought immediate intervention of the Paramount Power so as to induce fulfilment of the promise made by the Thakore Saheb. This was not the way of *ahimsa* or conversion; it was the way of *himsa* or coercion. My fast to be pure should have been addressed only to the Thakore Saheb, and I should have been content to die, if I could not have melted his heart.....". I hope you realise that you misapplied the stray sentences taken from their setting. I described my fast as "tainted" not because it was bad *ab initio* but because I sought the intervention of the Paramount Power. I have given you the credit of being unaware of the article. I wish you could read it. In any case, may I expect you to correct the error? For me the Rajkot episode is one of the happiest chapters of my life, in that God gave me the courage to own my mistake and purge it by renouncing the fruits of the award. I became stronger for the purging.

12. "I must confess that speaking for myself it is certainly repugnant to western ideas of decency to exploit against an opponent his feelings of humanity, chivalry or mercy or to trifle with such a sacred trust as one's own life in order to play on the feelings of the public for the sake of some purely mundane object"

I must tread with extreme caution upon the ground with which you are infinitely more familiar than I can be. Let me however remind you of the historic fast of the late MacSwiney. I know that the British Government let him die in imprisonment. But he has been acclaimed by the Irish people as a hero and a martyr. Edward Thompson in his "You have Lived through all this" says that the late Mr. Asquith called the British Government's action a "political blunder of the first magnitude". The author adds: "He was allowed to die by inches, while the world watched with a passion of admiration and sympathy and innumerable British men and women begged their Government not to be such a damned fool". And is it repugnant to western ideas of decency to exploit (if that expression must be retained) against the opponent his feelings of humanity, chivalry or mercy? Which is better, to take the opponent's life secretly or openly, or to credit him with finer feelings and evoke them by fasting and the like?. Again, which is better, to trifle with one's own life by fasting or some other way of self-immolation, or to trifle with it by engaging in an attempt to compass the destruction of the opponent and his dependents?

13. "What he says in effect is this. You say, Government is right and the Congress is wrong. I say the Congress is right and the Government is wrong. I choose to put the burden of proof on you. I am the only person to be convinced. You must either admit you are wrong or submit your reasons to me and make me the sole arbiter in the matter..... It seems to me that Mr. Gandhi's demand is rather like asking the United Nations to appoint Hitler to adjudge the responsibility for the present war. It is not usual in this country to put the accused person on the bench to judge his own case".

This is an unbecoming caricature of my letters to the Viceroy. What I said in effect was this. "You have allowed me to consider myself as your friend. I do not want to stand on my rights and demand a trial. You accuse me of being in the wrong. I contend that your Government is in the wrong. Since you would not admit your Government's error, you owe it to me to let me know wherein I have erred. For, I am in the dark as to how I have erred. If you convince me of my guilt, I will make ample amends". My simple request you have turned against me and compared me to an imaginary Hitler appointed to adjudge his own case. If you do not accept my interpretation of my own letters, can I not say, let an impartial judge examine the rival interpretations? Will it be an offensive comparison if I recall the fable of the wolf who was always in the right and the lamb who was always in the wrong?

14. "Mr. Gandhi is the leader of an open rebellion..... He forfeits that right (the right of being heard) so long as he remains an open rebel. He cannot claim to function except through the success of his own method. He cannot take part in public life under the protection of the law that he denies. He cannot be a citizen and yet not a subject".

You are right in describing me as the leader of an open rebellion except for a fundamental omission, namely, strictly non-violent. This omission is on a par with the omission of "nots" from the Commandments and quoting them in support of killing, stealing, etc. You may dismiss the phrase or explain it away in any manner you like. But when you quote a person you may not omit any thing from his language, especially an omission which changes the whole aspect of things. I have declared myself an open rebel on many occasions, even during my visit to London on the occasion of the Second Round Table Conference. But the anathema that you have pronounced against me has not been pronounced before. You will perhaps recall the time when the late Lord Reading was willing to hold a Round Table Conference in which I was to be present; although I was leading a mass civil disobedience movement. It was not called because I had insisted that the Ali Brothers, who were then in prison, should be released. British history which I was taught as a lad had it that Wat Tyler and John Hampden who had rebelled were heroes. In very recent times the British Government treated with Irish rebels whilst their hands were still

red with blood. Why should I become an outcast although my rebellion is innocent and I have had nothing to do with violence?

In spite of the validity of my claim that you have enunciated a novel doctrine I admit that you made a perfect statement when you said, "He cannot claim to function except through the success of his own method". My method, being based on truth and non-violence, ever succeeds to the extent it is applied. Therefore I function always and only through the success of my method and to the extent that I correctly represent, in my own person, its fundamentals.

The moment I became a *Satyagrahi* from that moment I ceased to be a subject, but never ceased to be a citizen. A citizen obeys laws voluntarily and never under compulsion or for fear of the punishment prescribed for their breach. He breaks them when he considers it necessary and welcomes the punishment. That robs it of its edge or of the disgrace which it is supposed to imply.

15. "In some of the published correspondence, Mr. Gandhi has made much of his intention to seek an interview with the Viceroy. But the Congress Resolution still stood, together with Mr. Gandhi's own words 'do or die'. The Government communiqué, on the subject of his fast, has already reminded the public of Mr. Gandhi's statement made on 14th July that there was no room left in the proposal for withdrawal or negotiation..... I may again quote Mr. Gandhi's own words.....; 'Every one of you should, from this moment onwards, consider yourself a free man or woman and act as if you are free and are no longer under the heel of this imperialism'. Now listen to this: 'You may take it from me that I am not going to strike a bargain with the Viceroy for Ministries or the like. I am not going to be satisfied with anything short of complete freedom'. 'We shall do or die.' We shall either free India or die in the attempt'. 'This is open rebellion'.

Let me first of all make a vital correction of the quotation you have taken from my press statement made on the 14th July and reported in the *Harijan* of 26th July. You have quoted me as saying that "there was no room left in the proposal for withdrawal or negotiation". The real quotation is, "there is room left for negotiations in the proposal for withdrawal". You will admit that the difference is material. The faulty quotation apart, you have omitted the necessary statement, which occupies nearly three columns of the *Harijan*, all the things which amplify my meaning and show the caution with which I was working. I take a few sentences from that statement. "It is possible that the British may negotiate a withdrawal." It they do it will be a feather in their cap. Then it will cease to be a case for withdrawal. If the British see, however late, the wisdom of recognising the freedom of India without reference to the various parties, all things are possible. But the point I want to stress is this". Here follows the sentence misquoted by you. The paragraph then proceeds: "Either they recognise Independence or they don't. After recognition, many things can follow, for by that single act, the British representatives will have altered the face of the whole landscape and revived the hope of the people which has been frustrated time without number. Therefore whenever that great act is performed on behalf of the British people, it will be a red letter day in the history of India and the world. And as I have said it can materially affect the fortunes of the war". From this fuller quotation, you will see how every thing that was being done was done in order to ensure victory and ward off Japanese aggression. You may not appreciate my wisdom but you may not impugn my good faith.

Though I have no verbatim report of my speeches before the All-India Congress Committee, I have fairly full notes. I accept the correctness of your quotations. If you bear in mind that all things were said with non-violence always as the background, the statements become free from any objection. "Do or die" clearly means do your duty by carrying out instructions and die in the attempt if necessary.

As to my exhortation to the people to consider themselves free, I take the following from my notes. "The actual struggle does not commence this very

moment. You have merely placed certain powers in my hands. My first act will be to wait upon His Excellency the Viceroy and plead with him for the acceptance of the Congress demand. This may take two or three weeks. What are you to do in the meanwhile? I will tell you. There is the spinning wheel. I had to struggle with the Maulana Saheb before it dawned upon him that in a non-violent struggle it had an abiding place. The fourteen-fold constructive programme is all there for you to carry out. But there is something more you have to do and it will give life to that programme. Every one of you should from this very moment consider yourself a free man or woman and even act as if you are free and no longer under the heel of this Imperialism. This is no make-believe. You have to cultivate the spirit of freedom before it comes physically. The chains of a slave are broken the moment he considers himself a free man. He will then tell his master: 'I have been your slave all these days but I am no longer that now. You may kill me, but if you do not and if you release me from the bondage, I will ask for nothing more from you. For henceforth, instead of depending upon you I shall depend upon God for food and clothing. God has given me the urge for freedom and therefore I deem myself to be a free man. Apart from your resentment of the "Quit India" cry, ask yourself whether the quotation as found in its own setting is in any way offensive? Should not a man, longing to be free, first of all cultivate the spirit of freedom and act accordingly irrespective of consequences?

16. "It is not the method of peaceful persuasion to go to the person whom you wish to convince armed with a Resolution declaring mass rebellion. The essence of negotiation is that both parties should be uncommitted and that neither should exert the pressure of force on the other. That is true in any circumstances. But as between a subject and the State which rules him the position is still more emphatic. It is not for the subject to deal with the State on equal terms,' still less to approach it with an open threat."

At the outset let me make one correction. The resolution did not "declare" mass rebellion. It merely sanctioned the "starting of a mass struggle on non-violent lines on the widest possible scale so that the country might utilise the non-violent strength it has gathered during the last 22 years of peaceful struggle". I was to "guide the nation in the steps to be taken". The paragraph sanctioning the mass struggle also "appeals to British and the United Nations in the interest of world freedom".

The essence of negotiation should undoubtedly be that the parties are uncommitted and that neither "exerts the pressure of force" on the other. In the case under consideration the actual position is that one party has overwhelming force at its disposal and the other has none. About non-committal too the Congress has no commitments except the immediate attainment of freedom. Subject to that there is the widest latitude for negotiation.

Your proposition about the subject and the state is I know a reply to the cry of "Quit India". Only the cry is intrinsically just and the subject and the state formula is too antediluvian to have any real meaning. It is because the Congress has felt the subjection of India as an insufferable reproach that it has risen against it. A well-ordered state is subject to the people. It does not descend upon the people from above but the people make and unmake it.

The resolution of 8th August did not contain any threat open or veiled. It prescribed the limitations under which the negotiations could be carried on and its sanction was free of all "force", *i.e.*, violence. It consisted of self-suffering. Instead of appreciating the fact that the Congress laid all its cards on the table, you have given a sinister meaning to the whole movement by drawing unwarranted inferences. In so far as there was any violence after the 8th of August last on the part of any Congressman, it was wholly unauthorised as is quite clear from the resolution itself. The Government in their wisdom left me no time whatsoever for issuing instructions. The All-India Congress Committee finished after midnight on the 8th August. Well before sunrise on the 9th I

was carried away by the Police Commissioner without being told what crime I had committed. And so were the members of the Working Committee and the principal Congressmen who happened to be in Bombay. Is it too much when I say that the Government invited violence and did not want the movement to proceed on peaceful lines?

Now let me remind you of an occasion of an open rebellion when you played an important part. I refer to the famous Bardoli *Satyagraha* under Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. He was conducting a campaign of Civil Disobedience. It had evidently reached a stage when the then Governor of Bombay felt that there should be a peaceful end to the struggle. You will remember that the result of an interview between His Excellency the then Governor and the Sardar was the appointment of a committee of which you were a distinguished member. And the committee's findings were for the most part in favour of the civil resisters. Of course you may say, if you wish, that the Governor made a mistake in negotiating with a rebel, and so did you in accepting the appointment. Consider the reverse position, what would have happened, if instead of appointing a committee the Governor had attempted heavy repression. Would not the Government have been held responsible for any outbreak of violence, if the people had lost self-control?

17. "Government does hold Mr. Gandhi responsible for the recent happenings that have so disturbed the peace of India, caused so much loss of life and property of innocent persons and brought the country to the brink of a terrible danger. I do not say he had any personal complicity in acts of violence..... but it was he that put the match to the train carefully laid beforehand by himself and his colleagues. That he was forced to do so prematurely was not his fault but our fortune. This was the method by which they hoped to gain their ends. They may seek to repudiate it, now that it has proved unsuccessful, but the responsibility is theirs none-the-less..... If Mr. Gandhi wished to dissociate himself from them, he could have spoken for himself without consulting the members of the Working Committee. Can he then without cancelling the Congress rebellion, without reparation, without even assurances for the future, claim at any moment to step back as though nothing had happened into the public life of the country and be received by Government and society as a good citizen?"

I can accept no responsibility for the unfortunate happenings described by you. I have no doubt whatsoever that history will record that the responsibility for the happenings was wholly that of the Government. In the nature of things I could not put a match to a train which for one thing was never laid. And if the train was never laid, the question of prematureness does not arise. The deprivation of the people of their leaders you may consider "our fortune". I consider it a misfortune of the first magnitude for all concerned. I wish to repudiate nothing of what I have done or intended. I have no sense of repentence for I have no sense of having done any wrong to any person. I have stated times without number that I detest violence in any shape or form. But I can give no opinion about things of which I have no first-hand knowledge. I never asked for permission to consult the Congress Working Committee to enable me to dissociate myself from violence. I asked for permission to see them, if I was expected to make any proposals on behalf of the Committee. I cannot cancel the Congress rebellion which is of a purely non-violent character. I am proud of it. I have no reparation to make, for I have no consciousness of guilt. And there can be no question of assurances for the future, when I hold myself guiltless. The question of re-entering the public life of the country or being received by Government and society as a good citizen does not arise. I am quite content to remain a prisoner. I have never thrust myself on the public life of the country or on the Government. I am but a humble servant of India. The only certificate I need is a certificate from the inner voice. I hope you realise that you gave your audience not facts but your opinions framed in anger.

To conclude, why have I written this letter? Not to answer you anger with anger. I have written it in the hope that you may read the sincerity behind my own words. I never despair of converting any person even an official of the hardest type. General Smuts was converted, or say reconciled, as he declared in his speech introducing the bill giving relief in the terms of the settlement arrived at between him and me in 1914. That he has not fulfilled my hope or that of the Indian settlers which the settlement had inspired is a sad story, but it is irrelevant to the present purpose. I can multiply such recollections. I claim no credit for these conversions or reconciliations. They were wholly due to the working of truth and non-violence expressing themselves through me. I subscribe to the belief or the philosophy that all life in its essence is one, and that the humans are working consciously or unconsciously towards the realisation of that identity. This belief requires a living faith in a living God who is the ultimate Arbiter of our fate. Without Him not a blade of grass moves. My belief requires me not to despair even of converting you though your speech warrants no such hope. If God has willed it, He may put power in some word of mine which will touch your heart. Mine is but to make the effort. The result is in God's hands.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI.

(22)

[Personal.]

New Delhi, the 17th June 1943.

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I have your letter of the 21st May and have read with interest your comments on my Assembly speech of the 15th February. I see that you still maintain the position which you took up in your letters to His Excellency the Viceroy regarding the Congress Resolution of the 8th August and responsibility for the disturbances that followed it. As you know, Government have never accepted the construction which you sought to place on those events. So long as this fundamental difference exists, I must regretfully conclude that there is not sufficient common ground for profitable discussion of the other points raised in your letter.

Yours sincerely,
R. M. MAXWELL,

(23)

June 23rd, 1943.

DEAR SIR REGINALD MAXWELL,

I thank you for your reply of 17th instant received on 21st instant to my letter of 21st May last.

I had not hoped that my reply would remove the fundamental difference between us, but I had hoped and would still like to hope that the difference would be no bar to an admission and correction of discovered errors. I had thought, as I still think, that my letter did point out some errors in your Assembly speech of 15th February last.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI.

V.—THE LORD SAMUEL CORRESPONDENCE.

(24)

May 15th, 1943.

To

The Additional Secretary,
Government of India, Home Department.

SIR,

Will you please forward the enclosed to the Right Honourable Lord Samuel?

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI.

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(25)

(The Government of India have obtained Lord Samuel's consent to the publication of this letter).

May 15th, 1943.

DEAR LORD SAMUEL,

I enclose herewith a cutting from the *Hindu*, dated 8th April last, containing Reuter's summary of your speech in the House of Lords, during the recent debate. Assuming the correctness of the summary I feel impelled to write this letter.

The report distressed me. I was wholly unprepared for your unqualified association with the one-sided and unsifted statement of the Government of India against the Congress and me.

Your are a philosopher and liberal. A philosophic mind has always meant for me a detached mind, and liberalism a sympathetic understanding of men and things.

As it seems to me, there is nothing in what the Government has said to warrant the conclusions to which you are reported to have come.

From the summary I select below a few of the items which, in my opinion, are inconsistent with facts.

1. "The Congress Party has to a great extent thrown over democratic philosophy."

The Congress Party has never "thrown over democratic philosophy". Its career has been one progressive march towards democracy. Every one who subscribes to the attainment of the goal of Independence through peaceful and legitimate means and pays four annas per year can become its member.

2. "It shows signs of turning towards totalitarianism."

You have based your charge on the fact that the Working Committee of the Congress had control over the late Congress Ministries. Does not the successful party in the House of Commons do likewise? I am afraid even when democracy has come to full maturity, parties will be running elections and their managing committees will be controlling the actions and policies of their members. Individual Congressmen did not run elections independently of the party machinery. Candidates were officially chosen and they were helped by All-India leaders. "Totalitarian", according to the Oxford Pocket Dictionary, means "designating a party that permits no rival loyalties or parties". "Totalitarian State" means "with only one governing party". It must have violence as its sanction for keeping control. A congress member, on the contrary, enjoys the same freedom as the Congress President, or any member of the Working Committee. There are parties within the Congress itself. Above all, the Congress eschews violence. Members render voluntary obedience. The All-India Congress Committee can at any moment unseat the members of the Working Committee and elect others.

3. "They (Congress Ministers) resigned (not?) because they had not the support of their Assemblies. They resigned because *de jure* they were responsible to their electorates, *de facto* they were responsible to the Working Committee of the Congress and the Higher Command. That is not democracy. That is totalitarianism."

You would not have said this, if you had known the full facts. The *de jure* responsibility of the ministers to the electorate was not diminished in any way by their *de facto* responsibility to the Congress Working Committee, for the very simple and valid reason that the Working Committee derives its power and prestige from the very electorate to whom the ministers were responsible. The prestige that the Congress enjoys is due solely to its service of the people. As a matter of fact the ministers conferred with the members of their parties in their respective Assemblies and they tendered their resignations with their approval. But totalitarianism is fully represented by the Government of India which is responsible to no one in India. It is a tragic irony that a Government which is steeped in totalitarianism brings that very charge against the most democratic body in India

4. "India is unhappy in that the line of party division is the worst any country can have.....it is a division according to religious communities."

Political parties in India are not divided according to religious communities. From its very commencement the Congress has deliberately remained a purely political organisation. It has had Britishers and Indians, including Christians, Parsis, Muslims and Hindus as Presidents. The Liberal Party of India is another political organisation, not to mention others that are wholly non-sectarian. That there are also communal organisations based on religion and that they take part in politics, is undoubtedly true. But that fact cannot sustain the categorical statement made by you. I do not wish in any way to minimise the importance of these organisations or the considerable part they play in the politics of the country. But I do assert that they do not represent the political mind of India. It can be shown that historically the politico-religious organisations are the result of the deliberate application by the alien government of their "divide and rule" policy. When the British Imperial influence is totally withdrawn, India will probably be represented solely by political parties drawn from all classes and creeds.

5. "The Congress can claim at best barely more than half the population of India. Yet in their totalitarian spirit they claim to speak for the whole."

If you measure the representative character of the Congress by the number of members on the official roll, then it does not represent even half the population. The official membership is infinitesimal compared to India's vast population of nearly four hundred millions. The enrolled membership began only in 1920. Before that the Congress was represented by its All-India Committee whose members were mainly elected by various political associations. Nevertheless the Congress has, so far as I know, always claimed to speak the mind of India, not even excluding the Princes. A country under alien subjection can only have one political goal, namely, its freedom from that subjection. And considering that the Congress has always and predominantly exhibited that spirit of freedom, its claim to represent All-India can hardly be denied. That some parties repudiate the Congress, does not derogate from the claim in the sense in which it has been advanced.

6. "When Mr. Gandhi called upon the British Government to quit India, he said it would be for the Congress to take delivery."

I never said that, when the British quitted India, "the Congress would take delivery". This is what I said in my letter to His Excellency the Viceroy, dated 29th January last. "The Government have evidently ignored or overlooked the very material fact that the Congress by its August resolution asked nothing for itself. All its demands were for the whole people. As you should be aware the Congress was willing and prepared for the Government inviting Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah to form a National Government subject to such agreed adjustments as may be necessary for the duration of the war, such Government being responsible to a duly elected Assembly. Being isolated from the Working Committee except Shrimati Sarojini Devi. I do not know its present mind. But the Committee is not likely to have changed its mind."

7. "If this country or Canada, Australia, New Zealand, or South Africa or the United States had abstained from action as the Congress in India abstained .....then perhaps the cause of freedom everywhere would have gone under..... It is a pity that the leaders of the Congress do not realise that glory is not to be won in India by abandoning the cause of mankind."

How can you compare India with Canada and other dominions which are virtually independent entities, let alone Great Britain or the United States wholly independent countries? Has India a spark of the freedom of the type enjoyed by the countries named by you? India has yet to attain her freedom. Supposing the allied powers were to lose, and supposing further that the allied forces were to withdraw from India under military necessity, which I do not expect the countries you name may lose their independence. But unhappy India will be obliged to change masters, if she is even then in her defenceless state. The Congress does not abstain out of cussedness. Neither the Congress, nor any other organisation, can possibly kindle mass enthusiasm for the Allied cause without the present possession of Independence, to use your own expression either *de jure* or *de facto*. Mere promises of future Independence cannot work that miracle. The cry of "Quit India" has arisen from a realisation of the fact that if India is to shoulder the burden of representing, or fighting for, the "cause of mankind", she must have the glow of freedom now. Has a freezing man ever been warmed by the promise of the warmth of sunshine coming at some future date?

The great pity is that the ruling power distrusts every thing that the Congress does or says under my influence which it has suddenly discovered is wholly evil. It is necessary for a clear understanding that you should know my connection with the Congress and Congressmen. It was in 1935 that I was successful in my attempt to sever all formal connection with the Congress. There was no coolness between the Congress Working Committee members and myself. But I realised that I was cramped and so were the members whilst I was officially connected with the Congress. The growing restraints which my conception of non-violence required from time to time were proving too hard to bear. I felt therefore that my influence should be strictly moral. I had no political ambition. My politics were subservient to the demands of truth and non-violence as I had defined and practised for practically the whole of my life. And so I was permitted by the fellow members to sever the official connection even to the extent of giving up the four anna membership. It was understood between us that I should attend the meetings of the Working Committee only when the members required my presence for consultation in matters involving the application of non-violence or affecting communal unity. Since that time I have been wholly unconnected with the routine work of the Congress. Many meetings of the Working Committee have therefore taken place without me. Their proceedings I have often seen only when they have been published in the newspapers. The members of the Working Committee are independent minded men. They engage me often in prolonged discussions before they accept my advice on the interpretation of non-violence as applied to the problems arising from new situations. It will be therefore unjust to them and to me to say that I exercise any influence over them beyond what reason commands. The public know how even until quite recently in matters of moment the majority of the members of the Working Committee have on several occasions rejected my advice.

8. "They have not merely abstained from action, but the Congress has deliberately proclaimed the formula that it is wrong to help the British war effort by men or money and that the only worthy effort is to resist all war with non-violent resistance. In the name of non-violence they have led a movement which was characterised in many places by the utmost violence and the White Paper gives clear proof of the complicity of the Indian Congress leaders in the disorders."

This charge shows to what extent the British public has been misled by imaginary stories, as in the Government of India publication on the disturbances statements have been torn from their context and put together as if they were

made at one time or in the same context. The Congress is committed to non-violence so far as the attainment of freedom is concerned. And to that end the Congress has been struggling all these twenty years, however imperfectly it may be, to express non-violence in action, and I think it has succeeded to a great extent. But it has never made any pretence of war resistance through non-violence. Could it have made that claim and lived up to it, the face of India would have been changed and the world would have witnessed the miracle of organised violence being successfully met by organised non-violence. But human nature has nowhere risen to the height which full non-violence demands. The disturbances that took place after the 8th of August were not due to any action on the part of the Congress. They were due entirely to the inflammatory action of the Government in arresting Congress leaders throughout India and that at a time which was psychologically wholly wrong. The utmost that can be said is that Congressmen or others had not risen high enough in non-violence to be proof against all provocation.

It surprises me that although you have admitted that "this White Paper may be good journalism but it is not so good as a State document," you have based your sweeping judgment on the strength of that paper. If you would read the very speeches to which the paper makes reference, you will find there ample material to show that the Government of India had not the slightest justification in making those unfortunate arrests on August 9th last and after, or in making the charges they have brought against the arrested leaders after their incarceration—charges which have never been sifted in any court of law.

9. "Mr. Gandhi faced us with an utterly illegitimate method of political controversy, levying blackmail on the best of human emotions, pity and sympathy, by his fast. The only creditable thing to Mr. Gandhi about the fast was ending it."

You have used a strong word to characterise my fast. His Excellency the Viceroy has also allowed himself to use the same word. You have perhaps the excuse of ignorance. He had no such excuse, for he had my letters before him. All I can tell you is that fasting is an integral part of *Satyagraha*. It is a *Satyagrahi's* ultimate weapon. Why should it be blackmail when a man under a sense of wrong crucifies his flesh? You may not know that *Satyagrahi* prisoners fasted in South Africa for the removal of their wrongs; so they have done in India. One fast of mine you know, as I think you were then a Cabinet Minister. I refer to the fast which you resulted in the alteration of the decision of His Majesty's Government. If the decision had stood, it would have perpetrated the curse of untouchability. The alteration prevented the disaster.

The Government of India communiqué announcing my recent fast issued after it had commenced, accused me of having undertaken the fast to secure my release It was a wholly false accusation. It was based on a distortion of the letter I had written in answer to that of the Government. That letter dated the 8th February was suppressed at the time when the communiqué was issued. If you will study the question, I refer you to the following which were published in the newspapers:—

My letter to His Excellency the Viceroy, dated New Year's Eve, 1942.
His Excellency's reply, dated January 13th, 1943.
My letter, dated January 19th, 1943.
His Excellency's reply, dated January 25th, 1943.
My letter, dated January 29th, 1943.
His Excellency's reply, dated February 5th, 1943.
My letter, dated February 7th, 1943.
Sir R. Tottenham's letter, dated February 7th, 1943.
My reply, dated February 8th, 1943.

And I do not know from where you got the impression that I ended the fast, for which supposed act you give me credit. If you mean by it that I ended the fast before its time, I would call such an ending a discredit to me. As it was the fast ended on its due date, for which I can claim no credit.

10. "He (Lord Samuel) considered that the negotiations broke down on points on which they would not have broken down, had there been any real desire on the part of the Congress to come to a settlement."

The statements made by the President of the Congress, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Pandit Nehru, who carried on the prolonged negotiations, I venture to think, make it quite clear that no true man could have shown more real or greater desire for a settlement. In this connection it is well to remember that Pandit Nehru was, and I have no doubt still remains, an intimate personal friend of Sir Stafford Cripps at whose invitation he had come down from Allahabad. He could therefore leave no stone unturned to bring the negotiations to a successful issue. The history of the failure has yet to be written; when it is, it will be found that the cause lay elsewhere than with the Congress.

I hope my letter has not wearied you. Truth has been overlaid with much untruth. If not justice to a great organisation, the cause of Truth, which is Humanity, demands an impartial investigation of the present distemper.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI.

"HINDU".

Dated the 8th April 1943.

LORD SAMUEL ON PROVINCIAL AUTONOMY.

Lord Samuel (Liberal), said: "When democratic assemblies were elected under the provisions of the Government of India Act, with Governments responsible to them, we, the Liberal Party, regarded the fact with the greatest satisfaction. We looked upon it as a triumph for constitutional democracy by far the greatest that had come about in any oriental country. When I visited India I formed a very clear opinion that the provincial constitutions were working with remarkable success."

Lord Samuel referred to the second part of the report of Professor Coupland, who had been sent to make a survey of the constitutional situation. It gave a careful review of the success and non-success of the Provincial Assemblies and Governments and on the whole, reached the conclusion that their achievements were admirable. During the passage of the Government of India Act, doubts had been expressed about their ability to maintain law and order but they had firmly maintained law and order. In social legislation, they had a remarkable record and they were able to carry far more drastic measures in that sphere than would have been possible for any alien government. "We, the Liberals, felt that our faith in constitutional democracy had been justified. But to our deep regret, in recent years there has come a divergence. The Congress Party, by far the best organised and most active and effective of Indian parties, has to a great extent thrown over democratic philosophy, which it had purported to defend and promote. It shows signs of turning towards totalitarianism. I do not regard Mr. Gandhi as a dictator, but the Congress Party are a single party, claiming to speak for the whole nation and they have insisted that elected Ministries in Provinces shall be subject to the instructions of the Congress Working Committee and those within the Congress whom they term the higher command. Next to Mr. Gandhi the most distinguished figure is Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, whose ability and self-sacrifice and devotion to the cause in which he believes, and whose intellectual powers have made him a striking figure in the politics of India." Lord Samuel then quoted a long statement by Pandit Nehru in which he stated was included the passage: "Ministers and Congress parties in Legislatures are responsible to the Congress and only through it to the electorate".

"When the war came in September 1939 and the Congress Party took a hostile attitude towards the Government of India, the Working Committee sent instructions to Congress Ministries in Provinces where they held majorities to resign and they did resign. They resigned because they had lost the support of their Assemblies. They resigned because while *de jure* they were responsible to their electorates, *de facto* they were responsible to the Working Committee of the Congress and the Higher Command. That is not democracy; that is totali-

tarianism" said Lord Samuel with emphasis. "It is essentially the same political creed as animates Nazism, Fascism and Communism. India is unhappy in that the line of party division is the worst any country can have—it is a division according to religious communities. The Congress can claim at best barely more than half the population of India, yet in that totalitarian spirit they claim to speak for the whole, and when Mr. Gandhi called upon the British to quit India, he said it would be for the Congress to take deilvery". Having described Moslem demands, he said they were a very formidable development in the Indian situation, and added "those of us who believed in the principles of democracy cannot adhere in all cases to the simple principle of majority rule. It cannot apply to a country where there are fundamental divisions, whether of race or religion."

CONGRESS AND THE WAR.

"This war is a major crisis in the history of the world. For us, minor issues ought to take a second place. Parties in this country recognise that and have put aside for the time being their controversies to unite in defence of world liberty. This country has almost with unanimity come forward in defence of these liberties. But if this country or Canada, Australia, New Zealand or South Africa, or the United States had abstained from action, as the Congress in India has abstained, or indeed Eire has abstained, then perhaps freedom everywhere would have gone under. We are fighting not only for our own liberties, but the liberties of India and every other country and those who now stand aloof are doing less than their duty to mankind. It is a pity that leaders of the Congress do not realise that glory is not to be won in India by abandoning the cause of mankind. They have not merely abstained from action, but the Congress has deliberately proclaimed the formula that it is wrong to help the British war effort by men or money and that the only worthy effort is to resist all war with non-violent resistance.

"In the name of non-violence they have led a movement, which was characterised in many places by the utmost violence and the White Paper gives clear proof of the complicity of the Indian Congress leaders in the disorders. Mr. Gandhi faced us with an utterly illegitimate method of political controversy, levying blackmail on the best of human emotions, pity and sympathy, by his fast. The only creditable thing to Mr. Gandhi about that fast was ending it."

Referring to the Cripps Mission in India, Lord Samuel said that in Sir Stafford Cripps, "they chose the best spokesman that could be chosen and he discharged his task admirably." He considered that the negotiations broke down on points on which they would not have broken down, had there been any real desire on the part of the Congress to come to a settlement. We, as Liberals, would not consent in the supposed name of liberty that Britain should march with confusion, riots, civil war and economic collapse. If that put an end to 200 years of beneficient, constructive and pacific British administration in India, that would hold us up to the scorn of our contemporaries and the just censure of posterity. The hands of the friends of Indian nationalism in this country are tied by the doings of the Indian Congress itself and they feel it is not the British Government which should be subject to our criticism. We may regret the tone of the pronouncements and publications that have come from Downing Street and New Delhi, which have not always been very happily phrased. It is not only important what you say, but how you say it. This White Paper may be good journalism, but is not so good as a state document. Referring to what he said in a former debate, Lord Samuel, continued that there must be a change in the position of the Viceroy, which would put the Viceroy in the same position as the Governor-General in the Dominions.

VICEROY SHOULD APPOINT PREMIER.

It would enable him to appoint some Indian statesman as Prime Minister and enable him to constitute an Indian government. But these points could not be a solution so long as the Congress takes the attitude it does, and so long as by repercussion the Moslem League takes its position. There must be a change in the atmosphere. The only new suggestion we can make is that, since

active politicians in India have brought matters to a complete deadlock that seems likely to endure, would it be possible to relegate the matter until some change of atmosphere takes place to the realm of the political scientists? Let some studious explorations be made into the possibilities of the various forms of constitution applicable to the various conditions of India. The principle of majority rule having come to a dead end, what possible principles might be applied? Nothing could be better for Indians themselves, than that perhaps some political science departments of great Indian universities should take the initiative with the co-operation, if they desire, of the United States and this country. In the meantime, this House has no alternative but to support His Majesty's Government here and the Government of India in measures before us today and other measures necessitated by the intransigence of the Congress Party."

In conclusion, Lord Samuel said that the House rejoiced in the staunchness of the troops, the police, the civil service and others in India and rejoiced in the enlistment of a million and a half soldiers into the Indian Army and the vast material resources made available from India. "We look forward to the day when a Council of Asia, with a free India and wiser leadership than is vouchsafed today, may be able to take a full and helpful part in world affairs."

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(26)

HOME DEPARTMENT,
May 26th, 1943.

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I am desired to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of May 15th, enclosing a letter for the Right Honourable Lord Samuel. I am to say that, for the reasons which have been explained to you in another connection, the Government of India have decided that your letter cannot be forwarded.

Yours sincerely,

R. TOTTENHAM,
Additional Secretary.

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(27)

June 1st, 1943.

DEAR SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM,

I have your note of the 26th ultimo conveying the Government's decision about my letter to the Right Honourable Lord Samuel. I would just like to say that the letter is not "political correspondence" but it is a complaint to a member of the House of Lords pointing out misrepresentations into which he has been betrayed and which do me an injustice. The Government's decision amounts to a ban on the ordinary right belonging even to a convict or correcting damaging misrepresentations made about him. Moreover, I suggest that the decision about my letter to Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah is wholly inapplicable to this letter to the Right Honourable Lord Samuel. Therefore I request reconsideration of the decision.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI.

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(28)

HOME DEPARTMENT,
June 7th, 1943.

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I am directed to acknowledge your letter to Sir Richard Tottenham, dated 1st June 1943, on the subject of Government's decision regarding your letter to Lord Samuel and to say that Government regret that they do not see their way to alter that decision.

Yours sincerely,
E. CONRAN-SMITH,
Secretary.

VI.—THE AUGUST RESOLUTION LETTERS.

(29)

To

The Additional Secretary, Home Department,
Government of India.

July 16th, 1943.

SIR,

I observe from the daily papers that there is a persistent rumour going the round that I have written to His Excellency the Viceroy withdrawing the A.-I.C.C. resolution of 8th August last. I observe too that much speculation is being built upon the rumour. I suggest that the Government should issue a contradiction of the rumour. For I have neither the authority nor the wish to withdraw the resolution. My personal opinion is that the resolution was the only one the A.-I.C.C. could have passed, if the Congress was to make any effective contribution to the cause of human freedom which is involved in the immediate independence of India.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI.

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(30)

HOME DEPARTMENT,
July 29th, 1943.

SIR,

In reply to your letter of the 16th July, I am directed to inform you that the Government of India do not think it necessary to issue a contradiction of the rumour to which you refer.

I am, etc.,
R. TOTTENHAM,
Additional Secretary.

VII.—THE "CONGRESS RESPONSIBILITY" LETTERS.

(A)

March 5th, 1943.

DEAR SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM,

Gandhiji wishes me to inquire whether he is to be favoured with a copy of the pamphlet issued by the Home Department containing a portion of the evidence in support of the charges against the Congress and himself.

Yours truly,
PYARELAL.

(B)

HOME DEPARTMENT,
March 19th, 1943.

DEAR SIR,

We understand from your letter of March 5th, which reached me a few days ago, that Mr. Gandhi wishes to have a copy of the Government of India publication entitled "Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances, 1942-43". If so, I am desired to say that we should be glad to supply it.

Yours truly,
R. TOTTENHAM.

To

Pyarelal, Esq.

(C)

To

Sir Richard Tottenham,
Home Department.

March 28th, 1943.

DEAR SIR,

With reference to your letter of 19th instant, I have to say that your interpretation of my letter of March 5th is correct and Gandhiji will be thankful if a copy of the pamphlet "Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances, 1942-43" is supplied to him.

Yours truly,
PYARELAL.

(D)

HOME DEPARTMENT,
April 5th, 1943.

DEAR SIR,

With reference to your letter of March 28th, I am directed to enclose herewith a copy of the pamphlet "Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances, 1942-43" as requested by Mr. Gandhi.

Yours truly,
R. TOTTENHAM.

To

Pyarelal, Esq.

(31)

NOTE.—The cover of Mr. Gandhi's original reply contained the request that the Appendices should be regarded as an integral part of the reply.

July 15th, 1943.

To The Additional Secretary, Home Department.

SIR,

In reply to my request dated 5th March last for a copy of Government of India publication entitled "Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances 1942-43", I received a copy on 13th April. It contains several corrections marked in red ink. Some of them are striking.

2. I take it that the Government have based the charges made in the publication against the Congress and myself on the material printed therein and not on the evidence which, as stated in the preface, is withheld from the public.

3. The preface is brief and is signed by Sir R. Tottenham, Additional Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department. It is dated 13th February last, *i.e.*, three days after the commencement of my recent fast. The date is ominus. Why was the period of my fast chosen for publishing a document in which I am the target?

4. The preface commences thus:

"In response to demands which have reached Government from several sources, Government have now prepared a review which brings together a number of facts.....bearing on the responsibility of Mr. Gandhi and the Congress High Command for the disturbances which followed the sanctioning of a mass movement by the A.-I.C.C. on August 8th, 1942."

There is an obvious misstatement here. The disturbances followed not the "sanctioning of the mass movement by the A.-I.C.C." but the arrests made by the Government. As for the "'demands", so far as I am aware, they began soon after the wholesale arrests of principal Congressmen all over India. As the Government are aware, in my letters to His Excellency the Viceroy, the last being dated 7th February 1943, I had asked for proof in support of my alleged guilt. The evidence now produced might have been given to me when I raised the question. Had my request been complied with, one advantage would certainly have accrued. I would have been heard in answer to the charges brought against me. That very process would have delayed the fast, and who knows, if Government had been patient with me, it might have even prevented it.

5. The preface contains the following sentence: "Almost all the facts presented in this review are, or should be, already within the knowledge of the public." Therefore, so far as the public are concerned, there was no such hurry as to require publication of the document during the fast. This train of reasoning has led me to the inference that it was published in expectation of my death which medical opinion must have considered almost a certainty. It was feared even during my previous long fasts. I hope my inference is wholly wrong and the Government had a just and valid reason for choosing the time that they did for the publication of what is after all an indictment of the Congress and me. I hope to be pardoned for putting on paper an inference which, if true, must discredit the Government. I feel that I am being just to them by unburdening myself of a suspicion instead of harbouring it and allowing it to cloud my judgment about their dealings with me.

6. I now come to the indictment itself. It reads like a presentation of his case by a prosecutor. In the present case the prosecutor happens to be also the policeman and jailor. He first arrests and gags his victims, and then opens his case behind their backs.

7. I have read it again and again. I have gone through the numbers of *Harijan* which my companions happened to have with them; and I have come to the conclusion that there is nothing in my writings and doings that could have warranted the inferences and the innuendoes of which the indictment is full. In spite of my desire to see myself in my writings as the author has seen me I have completely failed.

8. The indictment opens with a misrepresentation. I am said to have deplored "the introduction of foreign soldiers into India to aid in India's defence". In the *Harijan* article on which the charge is based. I have refused to believe that India was to be defended through the introduction of foreign soldiers. If it is India's defence that is aimed at, why should trained Indian soldiers be sent away from India and foreign soldiers brought in instead? Why should the Congress—an organisation which was born and lives for the very sake of India's freedom—be suppressed? I am clearer today in my mind than I was when I penned that article on 19th April, that India is not being defended, and that if things continue to shape themselves as they are, India will sink at the end of the war deeper than she is today, so that she might forget the very word freedom. Let me quote the relevant passages from the *Harijan* article referred to by the author:

"I must confess that I do not look upon this event with equanimity. Cannot a limitless number of soldiers be trained out of India's millions? Would they not make as good fighting material as any in the world? Then why foreigners? We know what American aid means. It amounts in the end to American influence, if not American rule added to British. It is a tremendous price to pay for the possible success of Allied arms. I see no Indian freedom peeping through all this preparation for the so-called defence of India. It is a preparation pure and simple for the defence of the British Empire, whatever may be asserted to the contrary." (*Harijan*, April 26th, 1942, p. 128.)

[*Vide* Appendix I (T.).]

9. The second paragraph of the indictment opens with this pregnant sentence:

"It will be suggested that during the period of Mr. Gandhi's first advocacy of British withdrawal from India and the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee in Bombay on August 7th the Congress High Command, and in the later stages the Congress organisation as a whole, were deliberately setting the stage for a mass movement designed to free India finally from British rule."

Let me italicize the phrase *it will be suggested*. Why should anything be left to suggestion about a movement which is open and above board? Much ado has been made about the simplest things which nobody has cared to deny and of which Congressmen are even proud. The Congress organisation as a whole "deliberately set the stage designed to free India finally from British rule" as early as the year 1920 and not since my "first advocacy of British withdrawal from India" as suggested in the indictment. Ever since that year, the effort for a mass movement has never relaxed. This can be proved from numerous speeches of Congress leaders and from Congress resolutions. Young and impatient Congressmen and even elder men have not hesitated at times to press me to hasten the mass movement. But I, who knew better, always restrained their ardour, and I must gratefully admit that they gladly submitted to the restraint. The contraction of this long period to the interval between my advocacy of British withdrawal from India and the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee in Bombay on August 7th, is wholly wrong and misleading. I know of no special staging since 26th April 1942.

10. The same paragraph then says that "an essential preliminary" to an examination of the type of movement "is a clear understanding of the real motives underlying the move". Why should motives be searched when everything is there in black and white? I can say without any hesitation that my motives are always plain. Why I asked for the immediate withdrawal of the British Power from India has been discussed by me almost threadbare in public.

11. At page 2 of the indictment, a phrase has been taken from my article entitled "One Thing Needful" dated 10th May 1942, and I am represented as saying that I would devote the whole of my "energy" to this "supreme act". By simply detaching the phrase from its context, mystery has been made to surround it. The phrase "supreme act" occurs in an argument addressed to an English friend and, if it is read in its setting, it ceases to be mysterious or

objectionable, unless the very idea of withdrawal is held objectionable. Here are the relevant parts from the argument:

"I am convinced, therefore, that the time has come during the war, not after it, for the British and the Indians to be reconciled to complete separation from each other. That way and that way alone lies the safety of both and, shall I say, the world. I see with the naked eye that the estrangement is growing. Every act of the British Government is being interpreted, and I think rightly, as being in its own interest and for its own safety. There is no such thing as joint common interest.....Racial superiority is treated not as a vice but a virtue. This is true not only in India: but it is equally true in Africa, it is true in Burma and Ceylon. These countries could not be held otherwise than by assertion of race superiority.

This is a drastic disease requiring a drastic remedy. I have pointed out the remedy—complete and immediate orderly withdrawal of the British from India at least, in reality and properly from all non-European possessions. It will be the bravest and the cleanest act of the British people. It will at once put the Allied cause on a completely moral basis and may even lead to a most honourable peace between the warring nations. And the clean end of Imperialism is likely to be the end of Fascism and Nazism. The suggested action will certainly blunt the edge of Fascism and Nazism which are an offshoot of Imperialism.

British distress cannot be relieved by nationalist India's aid in the manner suggested by the writer. It is ill-equipped for the purpose, even if it can be made enthusiastic about it. And what is there to enthuse nationalistic India? Just as a person cannot feel the glow of the sun's heat in its absence, even so India cannot feel the glow of freedom without the actual experience of it. Many of us simply cannot contemplate an utterly free India with calmness and equanimity. The first experience is likely to be a shock before the glow comes. That shock is a necessity. India is a mightly nation. No one can tell how she will act and with what effect when the shock is delivered.

I feel, therefore, that I must devote the whole of my energy to the realization of the supreme act. The writer of the letter admits the wrong done to India by the British. I suggest to the writer that the first condition of British success is the present undoing of the wrong. It should precede, not follow, victory. The presence of the British in India is an invitation to Japan to invade India. Their withdrawal removes the bait. Assume, however, that it does not; free India will be better able to cope the invasion. Unadulterated non-co-operation will then have full sway."

(*Harijan*, May 10th, 1942, p. 148.)

In this long extract, the phrase "supreme act" takes its legitimate place. It does not refer simply to the British withdrawal. But it sums up all that must precede and succeed it. It is an act worthy of the energy not of one person but of hundreds. This is how I began my answer to the English friend's letter:

"I can but repeat what I felt and said in my letter to Lord Linlithgow recording my impressions of the first interview with him after the declaration of war. I have nothing to withdraw, nothing to repent of. I remain the same friend today of the British that I was then. I have not a trace of hatred in me towards them. But I have never been blind to their limitations as I have not been to their great virtues."

(*Harijan*, May 10th, 1942, p. 148.)

To read and fully understand my writings, it is necessary to understand always this background. The whole of the movement has been conceived for the mutual benefit of India and England. Unfortunately, the author, ignoring this background, has approached my writings with coloured spectacles, and torn sentences and phrases from their context, and dressed them up to suit his preconception. Thus he has put out of joint "their withdrawal removes the bait", and omitted the sentence that immediately follows and which I have

restored in the foregoing extract. As is clear from the above article, unadulterated non-co-operation here refers exclusively to the Japanese.

12. The last paragraph at page 2 begins thus:

"In its earlier stages Mr. Gandhi's 'Quit India' move was meant and was widely interpreted as a proposal for the physical withdrawal from India of the *British* (italics mine), and of all Allied and British troops."

I have searched, and so have the friends with me, in vain, for some expression in my writings which would warrant the opinion that "Quit India" move was *meant* as a proposal for the physical withdrawal of the British from India. It is true that colour was lent to such an interpretation by a superficial reading of a sentence in the article of *Harijan* of April 26th, already quoted. As soon as my attention was drawn to it by an English friend, I wrote in the *Harijan* of 24th May as follows:

"There is evidently confusion in some minds about my invitation to the British to withdraw. For a Britisher writes to say that he likes India and her people and would not like willingly to leave India. He likes too my method of non-violence. Evidently the writer has confused the individual as such with the individual as the holder of power. India has no quarrel with the British people. I have hundreds of British friends. Andrews' friendship was enough to tie me to the British people."

With this clear enunciation of my views before him at the time of penning the indictment, how could he say that I had *meant* physical withdrawal of the British as distinguished from the British power? And I am not aware that my writing was "widely interpreted as such". He has quoted nothing in support of this statement.

13. The author proceeds in the same paragraph:

"As late as June 14th, he makes, for the purpose of his scheme, the assumption 'that the Commander-in-Chief of the United American and British Armies has decided that India is no good as a base'."

"For the purpose of his scheme" is a gratuitous interpolation here. The extract is taken from an interview with several journalists. I was answering a series of questions. At one stage I had put a counter-question thus, "Supposing England retires from India for strategic purposes, and apart from my proposal—as they had to do in Burma—what would happen? What would India do?" They replied: That is exactly what we have come to learn from you. We would certainly like to know that. I rejoined: "Well, therein comes my non-violence. For we have no weapons. Mind you, we have assumed that the Commander-in-Chief of the United American and British Armies has decided that India is no good as a base, and that they should withdraw to some other base and concentrate the Allied forces there. We can't help it. We have then to depend on what strength we have. We have no army, no military resources, no military skill either worth the name, and non-violence is the only thing we can fall back upon." It is clear from this quotation that I was not expounding any scheme. I was merely arguing about possibilities based on assumptions agreed between the interviewers and myself.

14. The author proceeds:

"Added strength is given to the belief that this is a correct interpretation of Mr. Gandhi's original intentions by the prominence, to which attention has already been drawn, of the theme that the British withdrawal would remove any Japanese motive for invading India; for with the British and Allied armies still in India, how is the bait removed?"

I have just now shown that the physical withdrawal of the British was never contemplated by me, of the Allied and the British troops was certainly contemplated in the first instance. Therefore, it is not a question of "interpretation", because it is one of fact. But the sentence has been impressed in order to make what is straight, look crooked.

15. Then, proceeds the author:

"At the same time he made it clear that on the British departure the Indian Army would be disbanded."

I made clear no such thing. What I did was to discuss with interviewers the possibilities in the event of British withdrawal. Indian army being a creation of the British Government, I assumed, would be automatically disbanded when that Power withdrew, unless it was taken over, by a treaty, by the replacing Government. If the withdrawal took place by agreement and with goodwill on both sides these matters should present no difficulty. I give in the Appendix the relevant passages from the interview on the subject. [*Vide* Appendix I (S.).]

16. From the same paragraph I take the following:—

"Bowing to the gathering force of this opposition, and also, as will be shown later, with a possible view to reconciling disagreement among members of the Working Committee, Mr. Gandhi discovered the 'gap' in his original proposals. In *Harijan* of June 14th, he paved the way,—by the slightly cryptic assertion that, if he had his way, the Indian National Government when formed would tolerate the presence of the United Nations on Indian soil under certain well defined conditions but would permit no further assistance—for the more definite statement made to an American journalist in the following week's *Harijan*, when in reply to a question whether he envisaged Free India's allowing Allied troops to operate from India, he said: 'I do. It will be only then that you will see real co-operation'. He continued that he did not contemplate the complete shifting of Allied troops from India and that, provided India became entirely free, he could not insist on their withdrawal."

This is for me the key thought opening the author's mind. It is built on finding motives other than those that are apparent from my language. Had I been guided by the force of the opposition whether from the foreign or the Indian Press or from Congressmen, I should not have hesitated to say so. It is well known that I am as capable of resisting opposition that makes no appeal to my head or my heart, as I am of readily yielding when it does. But the literal fact is that when I gave the country the withdrawal formula, I was possessed by one idea and one only, that if India was to be saved and also the Allied cause, and if India was to play not merely an effective but, may be, a decisive part in the war, India must be absolutely free now. The "gap" was this: although the British Government might be willing to declare India's independence, they might still wish, for their own and for China's defence, to retain their troops in India. What would be my position in that case? It is now well known that the difficulty was presented to me by Mr. Louis Fischer. He had come to Sevagram and stayed with me for nearly a week. As a result of the discussions between us, he drew up certain questions for me to answer. My reply to his second question, the author describes as a "slightly cryptic assertion" paving the way for a "more definite statement in the following week's *Harijan*". I give below the whole of the article embodying the questions and answers. It was written on 7th June 1942, and appeared in the *Harijan*, dated 14th June, p. 188.

Important Questions.

"A friend was discussing with me the implications of the new proposal. As the discussion was naturally desultory, I asked him to frame his questions which I would answer through *Harijan*. He agreed and gave me the following:—

1. *Q.* You ask the British Government to withdraw immediately from India. Would Indians thereupon form a National Government, and what groups or parties would participate in such an Indian Government?

A. My proposal is one-sided, *i.e.*, for the British Government to act upon, wholly irrespective of what Indians would do or would not do. I have even assumed temporary chaos on their withdrawal. But if the withdrawal takes place in an orderly manner, it is likely that on their withdrawal a Provisional Government will be set up by and from among the present leaders. But another thing may also happen. All those who have no thought of the nation but only of themselves may make a bid for power and get together the turbulent forces with which they would seek to gain control somewhere and somehow. I should

hope that with the complete, final and honest withdrawal of the British power, the wise leaders will realise their responsibility, forget their differences for the moment and set up a Provisional Government out of the material left by the British power. As there would be no power regulating the admission or rejection of parties or persons to or from the Council board, restraint alone will be the guide. If that happens probably the Congress, the League and the States representatives will be allowed to function and they will come to a loose understanding on the formation of a Provisional National Government. All this is necessarily guess work and nothing more.

2. *Q.* Would that Indian National Government permit the United Nations to use Indian territory as a base of military operations against Japan and other Axis powers?

A. Assuming that the National Government is formed and if it answers my expectations, its first act would be to enter into a treaty with the United Nations for defensive operations against aggressive powers, it being common cause that India will have nothing to do with any of the Fascist powers and India would be morally bound to help the United Nations.

3. *Q.* What further assistance would this Indian National Government be ready to render the United Nations in the course of the present war against the Fascist aggressors?

A. If I have any hand in guiding the imagined National Government, there would be no further assistance save the toleration of the United Nations on the Indian soil under well-defined conditions. Naturally there will be no prohibition against any Indian giving his own personal help by way of being a recruit or/ and of giving financial aid. It should be understood that the Indian army has been disbanded with the withdrawal of British power. Aain if I have any say in the councils of the National Government, all its power, prestige and resources would be used towards bringing about world peace. But of course after the formation of the National Government my voice may be a voice in the wilderness and nationalist India may go war-mad.

4. *Q.* Do you believe this collaboration between India and the Allied powers might or should be formulated in a treaty of alliance or an agreement for mutual aid?

A. I think the question is altogether premature, and in any case it will not much matter whether the relations are regulated by treaty or agreement. I do not even see any difference.

Let me sum up my attitude. One thing and only one thing for me is solid and certain. This unnatural prostration of a great nation—it is neither "nations" nor "peoples"—must cease if the victory of the Allies is to be ensured. They lack the moral basis. I see no difference between the Fascist or Nazi powers and the Allies. All are exploiters, all resort to ruthlessness to the extent required to compass their end. America and Britain are very great nations, but their greatness will count as dust before the bar of dumb humanity, whether African or Asiatic. They and they alone have the power to undo the wrong. They have no right to talk of human liberty and all else unless they have washed their hands clean of the pollution. That necessary wash will be their surest insurance of success, for they will have the good wishes—unexpressed but no less certain—of millions of dumb Asiatics and Africans. Then, but not till then, will they be fighting for a new order. This is the reality. All else is speculation. I have allowed myself, however, to indulge in it as test of my *bona fides* and for the sake of explaining in a concrete manner what I mean by my proposal."

What is described as the "more definite statement" is nothing but an impromptu reply given to an American journalist, Mr. Grover, representative of the Associated Press of America. If that interview had not chanced to come about, there might have been no statement "more definite" than what appeared in my reply to Mr. Louis Fischer. Hence the writer's suggestion that I "paved the way" for "the more definite statement.....in the following week's *Harijan*" is altogether unwarranted, if I may not call it even mischievous.

I do not regard my answers to Mr. Louis Fischer as a "slightly cryptic statement". They are deliberate answers given to deliberate questions framed after a full discussion lasting a week. My answers show very clearly that I had no scheme beyond the "Quit India" formula, that all else was guess, and that immediately the Allied Nations' difficulty was made clear to me, I capitulated. I saw the "gap" and filled it in, the best manner I knew. The "definite statement" fortunately for me, in my opinion, leaves little room if any for conjectures and insinuations in which the writer has indulged. Let it speak for itself. Here are the relevant portions:

It will be felt by the World.

Coming to the point Mr. Grover said again: "There is a good deal of speculation that you are planning some new movement. What is the nature of it?"

"It depends on the response made by the Government and the people. I am trying to find out public opinion here and also the reaction on the world outside."

"When you speak of the response, you mean response to your new proposal?"

"Oh yes," said Gandhiji, "I mean response to the proposal that the British Government in India should end today. Are you startled?"

"I am not" said Mr. Grover "you have been asking for it and working for it."

"That's right. I have been working for it for years. But now it has taken definite shape and I say that the British power in India should go today for the world peace, for China, for Russia and for the Allied cause. I shall explain to you how it advances that Allied cause. Complete independence frees India's energies, frees her to make her contribution to the world crisis. Today the Allies are carrying the burden of a huge corpse—a huge nation lying prostrate at the feet of Britain. I would even say at the feet of the Allies. For America is the predominant partner, financing the war, giving her mechanical ability and her resources which are inexhaustible. America is thus a partner in the guilt."

"Do you see a situation when after full independence is granted American and Allied troops can operate from India?" Mr. Grover pertinently asked.

"I do" said Gandhiji. "It will be only then that you will see real co-operation. Otherwise all the effort you put up may fail. Just now Britain is having India's resources because India is her possession. Tomorrow whatever the help, it will be real help for a *free* India."

"You think India in control interferes with Allied action to meet Japan's aggression?"

"It does."

"When I mentioned Allied troops operating I wanted to know whether you contemplated complete shifting of the present troops from India?"

"Not necessarily."

"It is on this there is a lot of misconcepion."

"You have to study all I am writing. I have discussed the whole question in the current issue of *Harijan*. I do not want them to go, on condition that India becomes entirely free. I cannot then insist on their withdrawal, because I want to resist with all my might the charge of inviting Japan to India."

"But suppose your proposal is rejected, what will be your next move?"

"It will be a move which will be felt by the whole world. It may not interfere with the movement of British troops but it is sure to engage British attention. It would be wrong of them to reject my proposal and say India should remain a slave in order that Britain may win or be able to defend China. I cannot accept that degrading position. India free and independent will play a prominent part in defending China. Today I do not think she is rendering any real help to China. We have followed the non-embarrassment policy so far. We will follow it even now. But we cannot allow the British Government to exploit it in order to strengthen the strangle-hold on India. And today it amounts to

that. The way, for instance, in which thousands are being asked to vacate their homes with nowhere to go to, no land to cultivate, no resources to fall back upon, is the reward of our non-embarrassment. This should be impossible in any free country. I cannot tolerate India submitting to this kind of treatment. It means greater degradation and servility, and when a whole nation accepts servility it means good-bye for ever to freedom."

India's gains from British victory?

"All you want is the civil grip relaxed. You won't then hinder military activity?" was Mr. Grover's next question.

"I do not know. I want unadulterated independence. If the military activity serves but to strengthen the strangle-hold, I must resist that too. I am no philanthropist to go on helping at the expense of my freedom. And what I want you to see is that a corpse cannot give any help to a living body. The Allies have no moral cause for which they are fighting, so long as they are carrying this double sin on their shoulders, the sin of India's subjection and the subjection of the Negroes and African races."

Mr. Grover tried to draw a picture of a free India *after* an Allied victory. Why not wait for the boons of victory? Gandhiji mentioned as the boons of the last World War the Rowlatt Act and martial law and Amritsar. Mr. Grover mentioned more economic and industrial prosperity—by no means due to the grace of the Government, but by the force of circumstances, and economic prosperity was a step further forward to Swaraj. Gandhiji said the few industrial gains were wrung out of unwilling hands, he set no store by such gains after this war, those gains may be further shackles, and it was a doubtful proposition whether there would be any gains—when one had in mind the industrial policy that was being followed during the war. Mr. Grover did not seriously press the point.

What can America do?

"You don't expect any assistance from America in persuading Britain to relinquish her hold on India?" asked Mr. Grover half incredulously.

"I do indeed" replied Gandhiji.

"With any possibility of success?"

"There is every possibility, I should think," said Gandhiji. "I have every right to expect America to throw her full weight on the side of justice, if she is convinced of the justice of Indian cause."

"You don't think the American Government is committed to the British remaining in India?"

"I hope not. But British diplomacy is so clever that America, even though it may not be committed, and in spite of the desire of President Roosevelt and the people to help India, it may not succeed. British propaganda is so well organised in America against the Indian cause that the few friends India has there have no chance of being effectively heard. And the political system is so rigid that public opinion does not affect the administration."

"It may, slowly," said Mr. Grover apologetically.

"Slowly?" said Gandhiji. "I have waited long, and I can wait no longer. It is a terrible tragedy that 40 crores of people should have no say in this war. If we have the freedom to play our part we can arrest the march of Japan and save China."

What do you promise to do?

Mr. Grover, having made himself sure that Gandhiji did not insist on the literal withdrawal of either the British or the troops, now placing himself in the position of the Allies, began to calculate the gains of the bargain. Gandhiji of course does not want independence as a reward of any services, but as a right and in discharge of a debt long overdue. "What specific things would be done by India to save China," asked Mr. Grover, "if India is declared independent?"

"Great things, I can say at once, though I may not be able to specify them today," said Gandhiji. "For I do not know what government we shall have. We have various political organisations here which I expect would be able to

work out a proper national solution. Just now they are not solid parties, they are often acted upon by the British power, they look up to it and its frown or favour means much to them. The whole atmosphere is corrupt and rotten. Who can foresee the possibilities of a corpse coming to life? At present India is a dead weight to the Allies."

"By dead weight you mean a menace to British and to American interests here?"

"I do. It is a menace in that you never know that sullen India will do at a given moment."

"No, but I want to make myself sure that if genuine pressure was brought to bear on Britain by America, there would be solid support from yourself?"

"Myself? I do not count—with the weight of 73 years on my shoulders. But you get the co-operation—whatever it can give willingly—of a free and mighty nation. My co-operation is of course there. I exercise what influence I can by writings from week to week. But India's is an infinitely greater influence. Today because of widespread discontent there is not that active hostility to Japanese advance. The moment we are free, we are transformed into a nation prizing its liberty and defending it with all its might and therefore helping the Allied cause."

"May I concretely ask—will the difference be the difference that there is between what Buma did and what, say, Russia is doing?" said Mr. Grover.

"You might put it that way. They might have given Burma independence after separating it from India. But they did nothing of the kind. They stuck to the same old policy of exploiting her. There was little co-operation from Burmans, on the contrary there was hostility or inertia. They fought neither for their own cause nor for the Allied cause. Now take a possible contingency. If the Japanese compel the Allies to retire from India to a safer base, I cannot say today that the whole of India will be up in arms against the Japanese. I have a fear that they may degrade themselves as some Burmans did. I want India to oppose Japan to a man. If India was free she would do it, it would be a new experience to her, in twenty-four hours her mind would be changed. All parties would then act as one man. If this live independence is declared today I have no doubt that India becomes a powerful ally."

Mr. Grover raised the question of communal disunion as a handicap, and himself added that before the American Independence there was not much unity in the States. "I can only say that as soon as the vicious influence of the third party is withdrawn, the parties will be face to face with reality and close up ranks," said Gandhiji. "Ten to one my conviction is that the communal quarrels will disappear as soon as the British power that keeps us apart disappears."

Why no Dominion Status?

"Would not Dominion Status declared today do equally well?" was Mr. Grover's final question.

"No good," said Gandhiji instantaneously. "We will have no half measures, no tinkering with independence. It is not independence that they will give to this party or that party, but to an indefinable India. It was wrong, I say, to possess India. The wrong should be righted by leaving India to herself."

(*Harijan*, June 21st, 1942, pp. 193 *et seq.*)

17. The rest of the chapter is taken up with a colourful description of the draft resolution I sent to Allahabad and a quotation containing remarks attributed to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, and Shri Rajagopalachari on that resolution. Immediately after the publication of the extracts from the notes seized by the Government, Panditji issued a statement which I append hereto [*vide* Appendix V (C.)]. I cannot understand why the author has disregarded that important statement, unless for the reason that he disbelieved Panditji's explanation. As for Shri Rajagopalachari's statement, the author stands on less insecure ground. Rajaji certainly holds the views attributed to him. In

the interview with Mr. Grover the American correspondent, this is what I said about Rajaji's difference with me:—

"May I finally ask you about your attitude to Rajaji's move?"

"I have declared that I will not discuss Rajaji in public. It is ugly to be talking *at* valued colleagues. My difference with him stands, but there are some things which are too sacred to be discussed in public."

But Mr. Grover had not so much in mind the Pakistan controversy as C. R.'s crusade for the formation of a national government. Mr. Grover had the discernment to make it clear that C. R. "could not be motivated by British Government. His position happens to harmonise with them."

"You are right," said Gandhiji. "It is fear of the Japanese that makes him tolerate the British rule. He would postpone the question of freedom until after the war. On the contrary I say that if the war is to be decisively won, India must be freed to play her part today. I find no flaw in my position. I have arrived at it after considerable debating within myself; I am doing nothing in hurry or anger. There is not the slightest room in me for accommodating the Japanese. No, I am sure that India's independence is not only essential for India, but for China and the Allied cause."

(*Harijan*, June 21st, 1942, p. 195.)

18. The first chapter concludes with the following commentary on the draft which had been sent by me to the Working Committee at Allahabad:—

"A draft, to repeat, of which the whole thought and background is one of favouring Japan, a resolution which amounts to running into the arms of Japan."

And this is written in spite of Pandit Jawaharlal's repudiation of the statement attributed to him, and in spite of my explanation about differences with Rajaji—all of which was before the writer.

19. In support of my contention that the author had no warrant for the opinions expressed in the sentences quoted, I would like to draw attention to the following extracts from my press statement reported in the *Bombay Chronicle* of 5th August last:—

"As the language of the draft (the one that was sent to Allahabad) shows, it had many I's to be dotted and T's to be crossed. It was sent through Miraben to whom I had explained the implications of the draft and I said to her or to the friends of the Working Committee who happened to be in Sevagram to whom I had explained the draft, that there was an omission—deliberate—from my draft as to the foreign policy of the Congress and, therefore, any reference to China and Russia.

"For, as I had said to them, I derived my inspiration and knowledge from Panditji about foreign matters of which he had been a deep student. Therefore, I said that he could fill in that part in the resolution.

"But I may add that I have never even in a most unguarded moment expressed the opinion that Japan and Germany would win the war. Not only that; I have often expressed the opinion that they cannot win the war; if only Great Britain will once for all shed her Imperialism. I have given expression to that opinion more than once in the columns of *Harijan* and I repeat here that in spite of all my wish to the contrary and of others, if disaster overtakes Great Britain and the Allied Powers it will be because even at the critical moment—most critical in her history—she has most obstinately refused to wash herself of the taint of Imperialism which she has carried with her for at least a century and a half."

How in the face of this categorical statement the author could say that the actuating motive behind the "Quit India" move was that I was "convinced that Axis would win the war" passes understanding.

20. In support of the same charge the author says:—

"That this attitude persisted long after the Allahabad meeting of the Working Committee is shown by the following remark made by Mr. Gandhi in *Harijan* of July 19th, in reply to a question whether it would not be wiser to postpone his movement until Britain had settled with the Germans and the Japanese:

"No, because I know you will not settle with Germans without us."

I quote below from the article in which this opinion is expressed. It is from the *Harijan* of July 19th, pp. 234 and 235, and is entitled 'A Two Minutes' Interview', the interviewer being a correspondent of the *Daily Express*, London.

"But the correspondent of the *Daily Express* (London) who was among the first to arrive and who was not staying until the end said he would be content with just a couple of minutes' interview, and Gandhiji acceded to his request.

He had made up his mind that if the demand for withdrawal which seemed to gather strength every day was rejected, there would be some kind of a movement. So he asked:

"Would you say that your movement will make it more difficult or less difficult for us to keep the Japanese out of India?"

"Our movement," said Gandhiji, "will make it more difficult for the Japanese to come in. But of course if there is no co-operation from Britain and the Allies, I cannot say."

"But", said Mr. Young, "think of the war as a whole. Do you think that your new movement will help the Allied nations towards victory, which you have said you also desire?"

"Yes, if my submission is accepted."

"What do you mean by your submission?—That Britain should offer non-violent battle?"

"No, no. My submission that British rule in India should end. If that is accepted victory for the Allied powers is assured. Then India will become an independent power, and thus a real ally, while now she is only a slave. The result of my movement, if it is sympathetically responded to, is bound to be a speedy victory. But if it is misunderstood by the British and they take up the attitude that they would like to crush it, then they would be responsible for the result, not I."

This was far from convincing Mr. Young. He would not think of any movement with equanimity. So he made an appeal to Gandhiji's sentiment—a sentiment he had more than once expressed:

"Mr. Gandhi, you have been in London yourself. Have you no comment to make on the heavy bombings which the British people have sustained?"

"Oh yes. I know every nook and corner of London where I lived for three years so many years ago, and somewhat of Oxford and Cambridge and Manchester too; but it is London I especially feel for. I used to read in the Inner Temple Library, and would often attend Dr. Parker's sermons in the Temple Church. My heart goes out to the people, and when I heard that the Temple Church was bombed I bled. And the bombing of the Westminster Abbey and other ancient edifices affected me deeply."

"Then don't you think", said Mr. Young, "it would be wiser to postpone your movement until we have settled with the Germans and the Japanese?"

"No, because I know you will not settle with the Germans without us. If we were free, we could give you cent. per cent. co-operation in our own manner. It is curious that such a simple thing is not understood. Britain has today no contribution from a free India. Tomorrow as soon as India is free, she gains moral strength and a powerful ally in a free nation—powerful morally. This raises England's power to the nth degree. This is surely self-proved."

It is curious that sentences taken out of a piece breathing concern for the success of the Allied arms are here presented as an indication of my "pro-Axis" mentality!

21. The following passage is then reproduced from my letter to His Excellency the Viceroy, of 14th August last as "significant":

"I have taken Jawaharlal Nehru as my measuring rod. His personal contacts make him feel much more the misery of the impending ruin of China and Russia than I can."

The misery of the impending ruin of China and Russia has been italicized by the author who thus comments on the passage:

"They foresaw a British rearguard action across India and the devastation that this must entail!!"

According to his wont the author has failed to quote the whole of the relevant part of the letter. Nor has he guided the reader by quoting the letter in the appendix. I quote below the relevant part:

"One thing more. The declared cause is common between the Government of India and us. To put it in the most concrete terms, it is the protection of the freedom of China and Russia. The Government of India think that freedom of India is not necessary for winning the cause. I think exactly the opposite. I have taken Jawaharlal Nehru as my measuring rod. His personal contacts make him feel much more the misery of the impending ruin of China and Russia than I can, and may I say than even you can. In that misery he tried to forget his old quarrel with Imperialism.

He dreads much more than I do the success of Nazism and Fascism. I argued with him for days together. He fought against my position with a passion which I have no words to describe. But the logic of facts overwhelmed him. He yielded when he saw clearly that without the freedom of India that of the other two was in great jeopardy. Surely you are wrong in having imprisoned such a powerful friend and ally."

The full letter is given in the appendix (*vide* Appendix IX). I suggest that the full quotation gives a meaning wholly different from that given by the author. The following passages from *Harijan* will further prove the baselessness of the charge of pro-Axis or "defeatist" tendency on my part:

Q. Is it a fact that your present attitude towards England and Japan is influenced by the belief that you think the British and the Allies are going to be defeated in this war?.....?"

A. ".....I have no hesitation in saying that it is not true. On the contrary I said only the other day in *Harijan* that the Britisher was hard to beat. He has not known what it is to be defeated.

(*Harijan*, June 7th, 1942, p. 177.)

".....America is too big financially, intellectually and in scientific skill, to be subdued by any nation or even combination.....".

(*Harijan*, June 7th, 1942, p. 181.)

22. A further complete answer to the same charge, if one were still needed, is furnished by my letter to Shrimati Miraben, dictated on the spur of the moment, and never meant for publication. The letter was written to her in answer to her question which carried to me her belief that the Japanese attack was imminent and that they were likely to have a walk-over. My answer leaves no doubt whatever as to my attitude. The letter was written after the Allahabad meeting of the All-India Congress Committee. It was dictated by me to the late Shri Mahadev Desai. The original is in Shrimati Miraben's possession. I know that she wrote a letter to Lord Linlithgow from this camp on December 24th last sending copies of this correspondence and requesting its publication. She never received even an acknowledgment of her communication. I hope it was not pigeon-holed without so much as being read. I give it in the appendix for ready reference [*vide* Appendix II (H)].

23. In view of the colourful description of my draft resolution sent to Allahabad, I reproduce opposite passages from the resolution, to show that the author has gone to everything connected with the Congress with the deliberate intention, as it seems to me, of seeing nothing but evil. Thus "Britain is incapable of defending India" is followed by these sentences:

"It is natural that whatever she (Britain) does is for her own defence. There is an eternal conflict between Indian and British interests. It follows their notions of defence would also differ. The British Government has no trust in India's political parties. The Indian Army has been maintained up till now mainly to hold India in subjugation. It has been completely segregated from the general population who can in no sense regard it as their own. This policy of mistrust still continues and is the reason why national defence is not entrusted to India's elected representatives."

24. Then there is this sentence taken from the draft:

"If India were freed her first step would probably be to negotiate with Japan". This has to be read in conjunction with the following paragraphs from the draft:

"This committee desires to assure the Japanese Government and people that India bears no enmity either towards Japan or towards any other nation. India only desires freedom from all alien domination. But in this fight for freedom the Committee is of opinion that India while welcoming universal sympathy does not stand in need of foreign military aid. India will attain her freedom through her non-violent strength and will retain it likewise. Therefore the Committee hopes that Japan will not have any designs on India. But if Japan attacks India and Britain makes no response to its appeal the Committee would expect all those who look to Congress for guidance to offer complete non-violent non-co-operation to the Japanese forces and not render any assistance to them. It is no part of the duty of those who are attacked to render any assistance to the attacker. It is their duty to offer complete non-co-operation.

It is not difficult to understand the simple principle of non-violent non-co-operation:—

1. We may not bend the knee to the aggressor nor obey any of his orders.
2. We may not look to him for any favours nor fall to his bribes. But we may not bear him any malice nor wish him ill.
3. If he wishes to take possession of our fields we will refuse to give them up even if we have to die in the effort to resist him.
4. If he is attacked by disease or is dying of thirst and seeks our aid we may not refuse it.
5. In such places where the British and Japanese forces are fighting our non-co-operation will be fruitless and unnecessary.

At present our non-co-operation with the British Government is limited. Were we to offer them complete non-co-operation when they are actually fighting, it would be tantamount to placing our country deliberately in Japanese hands. Therefore not to put any obstacle in the way of the British forces will often be the only way of demonstrating our non-co-operation with the Japanese. Neither may we assist the British in any active manner. If we can judge from their recent attitude, the British Government do not need any help from us beyond our non-interference. They desire our help only as slaves—a position we can never accept.

Whilst non-co-operation against the Japanese forces will necessarily be limited to a comparatively small number and must succeed if it is complete and genuine, the true-building up of Swaraj consists in the millions of India wholeheartedly working the constructive programme. Without it the whole nation cannot rise from its age-long torpor. Whether the British remain or not it is our duty always to wipe out unemployment, to bridge the gulf between rich and poor, to banish communal strife, to exorcise the demon of untouchability to reform dacoits and save the people from them. If crores of people do not take a living interest in this nation-building work, freedom must remain a dream and unattainable by either non-violence or violence."

I contend that from this setting it is impossible to infer pro-Japanese attitude or anti-British attitude on my part or that of the Working Committee. On the contrary there is determined opposition to any aggression and meticulous concern for the Allied arms. The demand for immediate freedom itself is born of that concern. If the search be for implacable opposition on my part to British Imperialism that search is superfluous, for it is patent in all my writings.

25. I would like to close this subject by quoting some passages from my speeches on the 7th and 8th August last:

Extract from the Hindustani Speech on 7th August

Then, there is the question of your attitude towards the British. I have noticed that there is hatred towards the British among the people. They say they are disgusted with their behaviour. The people make no distinction between British Imperialism and the British people. To them the two are

one. This hatred would even make them welcome the Japanese. This is most dangerous. It means that they will exchange one slavery for another. We must get rid of this feeling. Our quarrel is not with the British people, we fight their Imperialism. The proposal for the withdrawal of British power did not come out of anger. It came to enable India to play its due part at the present critical juncture. It is not a happy position for a big country like India to be merely helping with money and material obtained willy-nilly from her while the United Nations are conducting the war. We cannot evoke the true spirit of sacrifice and valour so long as we do not feel that it is our war. so long as we are not free. I know the British Government will not be able to withhold freedom from us when we have made enough self-sacrifice. We must therefore purge ourselves of hatred. Speaking for myself I can say that I have never felt any hatred. As a matter of fact I feel myself to be a greater friend of the British now than ever before. One reason is that they are today in distress. My very friendship therefore demands that I should try to save them from their mistakes. As I view the situation they are on the brink of and abyss. It therefore becomes my duty to warn them of their danger even though it may, for the time being, anger them to the point of cutting off the friendly hand that is stretched out to help them. People may laugh, nevertheless that is my claim. At a time when I may have to launch the biggest struggle of my life, I may not harbour hatred against anybody. The idea of taking advantage of the opponent's difficulty and utilising it for delivering a blow is entirely repugnant to me.

There is one thing which I would like you always to keep before your mind. Never believe that the British are going to lose the war. I know they are not a nation of cowards. They will fight to the last rather than accept defeat. But suppose, for strategic reasons they are forced to leave India as they had to leave Malaya, Singapore, and Burma, what shall be our position in that event? The Japanese will invade India and we shall be unprepared. Occupation of India by the Japanese will mean too the end of China and perhaps Russia. I do not want to be the instrument of Russia's and China's defeat. Pandit Nehru was only today describing to me the wretched condition of Russia. He was agitated. The picture he drew still haunts me. I have asked myself the question. "What can I do to help Russia and China?" And the reply has come from within, "You are being weighed in the balance. You have in the alchemy of ahimsa a universal panacea. Why don't you give it a trial? Have you lost faith?" Out of this agony has emerged the proposal for British withdrawal. It may irritate the Britishers today and they may misunderstand me; they may even look upon me as their enemy. But some day they will say that I was their true friend.

From the Hindustani Speech on 8th August

After showing concern for China I said:

I therefore want freedom immediately, this very night, before dawn, if it can be had. It cannot now wait for the realisation of communal unity. If that unity is not achieved, sacrifice for attaining freedom will need to be much greater than would otherwise have been the case. The Congress has to win freedom or be wiped out in the effort. The freedom which the Congress is struggling to achieve will not be for Congressmen alone but for the whole of the Indian people.

From the Hindustani Speech on 8th August

It will be the greatest mistake on their (United Nations') part to turn a deaf ear to India's non-violent pleading and refuse her fundamental right of freedom. It will deal a mortal blow to Russia and China if they oppose the demand of non-violent India which is today, on bended knee, pleading for the discharge of a debt long overdue ..... I have been the author of the non-embarrassment policy of the Congress and yet today you find me talking in strong language. My non-embarrassment plead, however, was always qualified by the proviso, "consistently with the honour and safety of the nation". If a man holds me by the collar and I am drowning, may I not struggle to free myself from the strangle-hold? Therefore there is no inconsistency between

our earlier declarations and our present demand ..... I have always recognised a fundamental difference between Fascism and the democracies, despite their many limitations, and even between Fascism and British Imperialism which I am fighting. Do the British get from India all they want? What they get today is from an India which they hold in bondage. Think what a difference it would make if India were to participate in the war as a free ally. That freedom if it is to come, must come today. For she will utilise that freedom for the success of the Allies, including Russia and China. The Burma Road will once more be opened, and the way cleared for rendering really effective help to Russia (China?).

Englishmen did not die to the last man in Malaya or on the soil of Burma. They effected instead, what has been described as a "masterly evacuation". But I cannot afford to do that. Where shall I go, where shall I take the forty crores of India? How is this mass of humanity to be set aflame in the cause of world deliverance unless and until it has touched and felt freedom? Today there is no life left in them. It has been crushed out of them. If lustre has to be restored to their eyes, freedom has to come not tomorrow but today. Congress must therefore pledge itself to do or die.

These quotations show clearly why I advised the Cogress to make the demand for the withdrawal of British Power. The quotations also show that non-violence *i.e.*, self-sacrificing and self-sacrifice without retaliation was the key-stone of the movement.

26. The author has had difficulty in finding an adequate explanation for my agreement to the stationing of Allied troops in India in spite of the withdrawal of British power. If he had an open mind, there should have been no difficulty. My explanation was there. There was no occasion to doubt its sincerity unless there was positive evidence to the contrary. I have never claimed infallibility or a larger share of intellect for myself than the ordinary.

27. The author says that no "satisfactory solution" of the difficulty raised by Rajaji, namely, that the stationing of the Allied forces, without civil power being with the British Government, would be "reinstallation of the British Government in a worse form" was "ever made public by Mr. Gandhi". The author therefore suggests that "the solution was one which he (I) preferred should remain a secret"; and he proceeds to say:

"Now while the details of Mr. Gandhi's personal solution of this problem must remain a matter for speculation, an explanation which fulfils the logical requirements of the above situation immediately comes to mind; it is that, as has been shown above to be probable, Mr. Gandhi's admission of this amendment to his scheme was intended primarily as a bid for American support and secondarily as a sop to his opponents on the Working Committee, but that he envisaged, or planned to create, circumstances in which this permission would be meaningless, that is to say, circumstances in which the troops would either be forced to withdraw, or would if they remained be rendered ineffective."

It is difficult to characterise this suggestion. I take it that the secrecy suggested was to be secret even from the members of the Working Committee. If not they would also become conspirators with me in the fraud to be perpetrated on the Allied powers. Amazing consequences would flow from such a fraud. Assume that the British Government has shed all power in India, that by an agreement between the free India Government and the Allied Powers, their troops are stationed in India. This assumption carries with it the further assumption that the agreement has been arrived at without any pressure violent or non-violent and simply from the British recognition of the necessity of recognising Independence of India. Assume further that the secret has all this time remained buried in my bosom, and that I suddenly divulge it to the free India Government and therefore to the world, and they carry out my plan to frustrate the terms of the agreement, what would be the result? The Allied Powers, having all the overwhelming military strength at their disposal, would forfeit my head to themselves—which would be the least—and would further let their righteous rage descend upon the free India Government and put an end to Independence, which was won, not by military strength, but simply

by force of reason, and therefore make it impossible, so far as they can, for India to regain such lost Independence. I must not carry this train of thought much further. The author's suggestion if it were true, would also conclusively prove that all of us conspirators were thinking, not of the deliverance of India from bondage, or of the good of the masses but only of our base little selves.

28. The difficulty pointed out by Rajaji and on which the writer has laid stress in order to infer "secret motive" on my part was pointed out even more forcibly by another correspondent and I dealt with it in the issue of *Harijan*, dated 19th July 1942, pages 232 and 233. As the whole of the article consists of questions and answers which have a bearing on the author's insinuations I reproduce them without apology:

Pertinent Questions

Q. 1. If non-violent activity is neutralised by and cannot go along with armed violence in the same area, will there remain any scope for non-violent resistance to aggression in the event of India allowing foreign troops to remain on her soil and operate from here?

A. The flaw pointed out in the first question cannot be denied. I have admitted it before now. The tolerance of Allied troops by Free India is an admission of the nation's limitations. The nation as a whole has never been and never been (has ?) claimed to be non-violent. What part is cannot be said with any accuracy. And what is decisive is that India has not yet demonstrated non-violence of the strong such as would be required to withstand a powerful army of invasion. If we had developed that strength we would have acquired our freedom long ago and there would be no question of any troops being stationed in India. The novelty of the demand should not be missed. It is a demand not for a transference of power from Great Britain to a Free India. For there is no party to which Britain would transfer such power. We lack the unity that gives strength. The demand therefore is not based on our demonstrable strength. It is a demand made upon Britain to do the right irrespective of the capacity of the party wronged to bear the consequences of Britain's right act. Will Britain restore seized property to the victim merely because the seizure was wrong? It is none of her concern to weigh whether the victim will be able to hold possession of the restored property. Hence it is that I have been obliged to make use of the word anarchy in this connection. This great moral act must give Britain moral status which could ensure victory. Whether without India Britain would have reason to fight is a question, I need not consider. If India is the stake and not British honour we should know. My demand then loses force but not justness.

Such being the case my honesty and honour require me to provide for the flaw. If to ask for the withdrawal of the Allied forces means their certain defeat, my demand must be ruled out as dishonest. Force of circumstances has given rise to the demand and also to its limitations. It must be admitted therefore that there will be little scope for non-violent resistance of aggression, with the Allied troops operating in India as there is practically none now. For the troops are there today enjoying full mastery over us. Under my demand they will operate under the nation's terms.

Q. 2. If the maintenance of India's freedom is allowed to be made dependent upon arms which, in the existing circumstances, will be led and controlled by Britain and America, can there be a feeling of real freedom experienced by the people of India, at any rate, during the duration of the war?

A. If Britain's declaration is honest I see no reason why the presence of the troops should, in any shape or form, affect the feeling of real freedom. Did the French feel differently when during the last war the English troops were operating in France? When my master of yesterday becomes my equal and lives in my house on my own terms, surely his presence cannot detract from my freedom. Nay, I may profit by his presence which I have permitted.

Q. 3. Whatever be the terms of the "treaty", if the Anglo-American military machine is allowed to operate for the "defence" of India, can Indians play anything but a minor and subordinate rôle in the defence of this country?

A. The conception in my scheme is that we do not want these troops for our defence or protection. If they left these shores we expect to manage somehow. We may put up non-violent defence. If luck favours us, the Japanese may see no reason to hold the country after the Allies have withdrawn, if they discover that they are not wanted. It is all speculation as to what can happen after withdrawal voluntary and orderly or forced.

Q. 4. Supposing the British, not from any moral motive but only to gain a political and strategical advantage for the time being, agree to a "treaty" under which they are allowed to maintain and increase their military forces in India, how can they be dislodged afterwards if they prefer to remain in possession?

A. We assume their or rather British honesty. It would be not a matter of dislodging them, it is one of their fulfilling their plighted word. If they commit breach of faith, we must have strength enough non-violent or violent to enforce fulfilment.

Q. 5. Is not the position postulated in the preceding question comparable to the position that would arise if, for instance, Subhas Babu made a treaty with Germany and Japan under which India would be declared "independent" and the Axis forces would enter India to drive the British out?

A. Surely there is as much difference between the South Pole and the North as there is between the imagined conditions. My demand deals with the possessor; Subhas Babu will bring German troops to oust the possessor. Germany is under no obligation to deliver India, from bondage. Therefore Subhas Babu's performance can only fling India from the frying pan into the fire. I hope the distinction is clear.

Q. 6. If the Congress, as Maulana Saheb has just stated, "considers defence as armed defence only", is there any prospect of real independence for India, in view of the fact that India simply has not got the resources "independently" to offer effective armed resistance to a formidable aggressor? If we are to think in terms of armed defence only, can India, to mention only one thing, expect to remain independent with her 4,000 miles of coast-line and no navy and ship-building industry?

A. Maulana Saheb, it is well known, does not hold my view that any country can defend itself without force of arms. My demand is based on the view that it is possible to defend one's country non-violently.

Q. 7. What material aid could India send to China today, even if she were declared "independent" by the British?

A. India at present gives such indifferent and ill-conceived aid as the Allies think desirable. Free India can send men and material that China may need. India has affinities with China being part of Asia which the Allies cannot possibly possess and exploit. Who knows that Free India may not even succeed in persuading Japan to do the right by China?

Why has the author ignored the explanation for instance in answers 2 and 4 which was before him? Boiled down, my explanation means that I would trust the Allies to carry out faithfully the conditions of the Contract to be fulfilled by them, just as I would expect them to trust the Government of Free India to carry out their part of the contract. British withdrawal, whenever it comes, will carry with it so much honour that everything to be done thereafter by either party will be done with the greatest goodwill and utmost sincerity. I hold that this solution of the difficulty presented is perfectly comprehensible and satisfactory.

29. As to secrecy, this is what I said on the 8th August in my Hindustani speech before the A.-I.C.C. meeting.

Nothing however should be done secretly. This is an open rebellion. In this struggle secrecy is a sin. A freeman would not engage in a secret movement. It is likely that when you gain freedom you will have a C.I.D. of your own, in spite of my advice to the contrary. But in the present struggle we have to work openly and to receive bullets in our chests, without running

away. In a struggle of this character all secrecy is sin and must be punctiliously avoided.

See also Appendix I. (C.).

It is somewhat hard for a man who has avoided secrecy as a sin to be accused of it, especially when there is no evidence whatsoever for the charge.

30. The author proceeds:

"..... and it is no coincidence that, at the same time as Mr. Gandhi was developing his 'Quit India' theme in *Harijan*, he was also inveighing against any form of 'scorched earth' policy. (Mr. Gandhi's solicitude for the property, largely industrial property be it noted, which it might have been necessary to deny to the enemy, contrasts strangely with his readiness to sacrifice countless numbers of Indians in non-violent resistance to the Japanese. The property must be saved; it is perhaps legitimate to ask—for whom?)"

"No coincidence" is a gratuitous suggestion for which there is no proof. The suggestion behind the parenthetical gloss is evidently that I was more solicitous about the property of moneyed men than of the lives and property of the masses. This appears to me to be a wilful distortion of truth. I give the following quotations which show the contrary:

"As a war resister my answer can only be one. I see neither bravery nor sacrifice in destroying life or property for offence or defence. I would far rather leave, if I must, my crops and homestead for the enemy to use than destroy them for the sake of preventing their use by him. There is reason, sacrifice and even bravery in so leaving my homestead and crops, if I do so not out of fear but because I refuse to regard any one as my enemy—that is, out of humanitarian motive.

But in India's case, there is, too, a practical consideration. Unlike Russia's India's masses have no national instinct developed in the sense that Russia's have. India is not fighting. Her conquerors are." (*Harijan*, March 22nd, 1942, page 88.)

"There is no bravery in my poisoning my well or filling it in so that my brother who is at war with me may not use the water. Let us assume that I am fighting him in the orthodox manner. Nor is there sacrifice in it, for it does not purify me, and sacrifice, as its root meaning implies, pre-supposes purity. Such destruction may be likened to cutting one's nose to spite one's face. Warriors of old had wholesome laws of war. Among the excluded things were poisoning wells and destroying food crops. But I do claim that there are bravery and sacrifice in my leaving my wells, crops and homestead intact, bravery in that I deliberately run the risk of the enemy feeding himself at my expense and pursuing me, and sacrifice in that the sentiment of leaving something for the enemy purifies and ennobles me.

"My questioner has missed the conditional expression 'if I must'. I have imagined a state of things in which I am not prepared just now to die and therefore I want to retreat in an orderly manner in the hope of resisting under other and better auspices. The thing to consider here is not resistance but non-destruction of food crops and the like. Resistance, violent or non-violent, has to be well thought out. Thoughtless resistance will be regarded as bravado in military parlance, and violence or folly in the language of non-violence. Retreat itself is often a plan of resistance and may be a precursor of great bravery and sacrifice. Every retreat is not cowardice which implies fear to die. Of course a brave man would more often die in violently or non-violently resisting the aggressor in the latter's attempt to oust him from his property. But he will be no less brave if wisdom dictates present retreat." (*Harijan*, April 12th, 1942, page 109.)

So far there is solicitude only for the poor man's property. There is no mention of industrial property. I have also given my reasons, which I still hold to be perfectly sound, for non-destruction of such property. I have found only one note in the issues of *Harijan* in my possession which refers to industrial property. It is as follows:—

Suppose there are factories for grinding wheat or pressing oil seed I should not destroy them. But munitions factories, yes;.....Textile factories

I would not destroy and I would resist all such destruction." (*Harijan*, May 24th, 1942, page 167.)

The reason is obvious. Here too the solicitude is not for the owners, but for the masses who use food products and cloth produced in factories. It should also be remembered that I have all along written and even acted against both kinds of factories, in normal times, in the interests of village industries, my creed being to prefer the products of hand labour in which millions can be engaged, to those of factories in which only a few thousands or, at best a few lakhs can be employed.

31. Mark too the last sentence in the penultimate paragraph of the draft resolution sent to Allahabad: "But it can never be the Congress policy to destroy what belongs to or is of use to the masses." It is incomprehensible how the author could, in the face of the foregoing, distort truth as he has done.

32. In the same paragraph from which I have quoted the parenthetical remark of the author, I find the following:—

"We have however his own admission that he could not guarantee that non-violent action would keep the Japanese at bay; he refers indeed to any such hope as an 'unwarranted supposition'."

And this is cited to support the conclusion that in order to prevent India from becoming a battlefield between the Allied Nations and Japan I was prepared "to concede to their (Japanese) demands". Let me quote where the phrase is taken from. In an article entitled "A Fallacy", in *Harijan*, dated 5th July 1942, I have dealt with the following question addressed to me by a correspondent:—

Q. "You consider it a vital necessity in terms of non-violence to allow the Allied troops to remain in India. You also say that, as you cannot present a fool-proof non-violent method to prevent Japanese occupation of India, you cannot throw the Allies overboard. But don't you consider that the non-violent force created by your action which will be sufficient to force the English to withdraw will be sufficiently strong to prevent Japanese occupation also? And is it not the duty of a non-violent resister to equally consider it a vital necessity to see that his country, his home and his all are not destroyed by allowing two foreign mad bulls to fight a deadly war on his soil?"

My reply to this runs as follows:—

A. "There is an obvious fallacy in the question. I cannot all of a sudden produce in the minds of Britishers who have been for centuries trained to rely upon their muscle for their protection, a belief which has not made a very visible impression even on the Indian mind. Non-violent force must not act in the same way as violence. The refusal to allow the Allied troops to operate on the Indian soil can only add to the irritation already caused by my proposal. The first is inevitable, the second would be wanton.

Again, if the withdrawal is to take place, it won't be due merely to the non-violent pressure. And in any case what may be enough to affect the old occupant would be wholly different from what would be required to keep off the invader. Thus we can disown the authority of the British rulers by refusing taxes and in a variety of ways. These would be inapplicable to withstand the Japanese onslaught. Therefore, whilst we may be ready to face the Japanese, we may not ask the Britishers to give up their position of vantage merely on the unwarranted supposition that we would succeed by mere non-violent effort in keeping off the Japanese.

Lastly, whilst we must guard ourselves in our own way, our non-violence must preclude us from imposing on the British a strain which must break them. That would be a denial of our whole history for the past twenty-two years." (*Harijan*, July 5th, 1942, page 210.)

The supposition referred to here is my correspondent's, namely, that the non-violent force created by my action which will be sufficient to force the

English to withdraw, will be sufficiently strong to prevent Japanese occupation also and therefore I should not have resiled from my original proposition that the British Power should withdraw their troops from India. I have shown the absurdity of such a supposition made for the sake of preventing the retention of British troops. My belief in the power of non-violence is unchangeable, but I cannot put it before the British in order to prevent their use of India as a base, if they consider it necessary, for dealing with the Japanese menace.

33. The author has further sought to strengthen his inference by quoting the following from my appeal to the Japanese:—

"And we are in the unique position of having to resist an imperialism that we detest no less than yours (the Japanese) and Nazism."

The author has conveniently omitted the sentences which follow and which instead of strengthening his inference would negative it altogether. These are the sentences:—

"Our resistance to it (British Imperialism) does not mean harm to the British people. We seek to convert them. Ours is an unarmed revolt against British rule. An important party in the country is engaged in a deadly—but friendly quarrel with the foreign Rulers.

But in this they need no aid from Foreign Powers. You have been gravely misinformed, as I know you are, that we have chosen this particular moment to embarrass the Allies when your attack against India is imminent. If we wanted to turn Britain's difficulty into our opportunity we should have done it as soon as the War broke out nearly three years ago. Our movement demanding the withdrawal of the British Power from India should in no way be misunderstood. In fact if we are to believe your reported anxiety for the Independence of India, a recognition of that Independence by Britain should leave you no excuse for any attack on India. Moreover the reported profession sorts ill with your ruthless aggression against China.

I would ask you to make no mistake about the fact that you will be sadly disillusioned if you believe that you will receive a willing welcome from India. The end and aim of the movement for British withdrawal is to prepare India by making her free for resisting all militarist and Imperialist ambition, whether it is called British Imperialism, German Nazism, or your pattern. If we do not we shall have been ignoble spectators of the militarisation of the world in spite of our belief that in non-violence we have the only solvent of the militarist spirit and ambition. Personally I fear that without declaring the Independence of India the Allied Powers will not be able to beat the Axis combination which has raised violence to the dignity of a religion. The Allies cannot beat you and your partners unless they beat you in your ruthless and skilled warfare. If they copy it their declaration that they will save the world for democracy and individual freedom must come to nought. I feel that they can only gain strength to avoid copying your ruthlessness by declaring and recognising *now* the freedom of India, and turning sullen India's forced co-operation into freed India's voluntary co-operation.

To Britain and the Allies we have appealed in the name of justice, in proof of their professions, and in their own self-interest. To you I appeal in the name of humanity. It is a marvel to me that you do not see that ruthless warfare is nobody's monopoly. If not the Allies some other Powers will certainly improve upon your method and beat you with your own weapon. Even if you win you will leave no legacy to your people of which they would feel proud. They cannot take pride in a recital of cruel deeds however skilfully achieved.

Even if you win it will not prove that you were in the right, it will only prove that your power of destruction was greater. This applies obviously to the Allies too, unless they perform *now* the just and righteous act of freeing India as an earnest and promise of similarly freeing all other subject peoples in Asia and Africa.

Our appeal to Britain is coupled with the offer of Free India's willingness to let the Allies retain their troops in India. The offer is made in order to

prove that we do not in any way mean to harm the Allied cause, and in order to prevent you from being misled into feeling that you have but to step into the country that Britain has vacated. Needless to repeat that if you cherish any such idea and will carry it out, we will not fail in resisting you with all the might that our country can muster. I address this appeal to you in the hope that our movement may even influence you and your partners in the right direction and deflect you and them from the course which is bound to end in your moral ruin and the reduction of human beings to robots.

The hope of your response to my appeal is much fainter than that of response from Britain. I know that the British are not devoid of a sense of justice and they know me. I do not know you enough to be able to judge. All I have read tells me that you listen to no appeal but to the sword. How I wish that you are cruelly misrepresented and that I shall touch the right chord in your heart! Anyway I have an undying faith in the responsiveness of human nature. On the strength of that faith I have conceived the impending movement in India, and it is that faith which has prompted this appeal to you." (*Harijan*, July 26th, 1942, page 240 *et seq.*).

I have given this long quotation because I see that it is a complete answer to the author's insinuations, as it is also an open gate to the whole of my mind regarding the movement contemplated in the resolution of 8th August last. But the author has many arrows in his quiver. For, in defence of his inference that I was prepared to "concede to their (Japanese) demands", he proceeds:

"Only in the grip of some dominant emotion would he (I) have contemplated such a capitulation. This emotion was, there seems little doubt, his desire to preserve India from the horrors of war."

In other words, I would exchange Japanese rule for British. My nonviolence is made of sterner stuff. Only a jaundiced eye can read such an emotion in the face of the clearest possible writings of *Harijan* that I would face all the horrors of war in order to end the horror of horrors which British domination is. I am impatient of it because I am impatient of all domination. I am in "the grip" of only one "dominant emotion" and no other, that is INDIA'S FREEDOM. The author has admitted this in the same breath that he has charged me with an unworthy emotion. He has thus condemned himself out of his own mouth.

34. At page 14 of the indictment the author says:

"In conclusion there are the famous words uttered by Mr. Gandhi at a press conference at Wardha, after the Working Committee had passed the resolution of July 14th, which show clearly how even at that early stage he was fully determined on a final struggle:—

"There is no room left in the proposal for withdrawal or negotiation. There is no question of one more chance. After all it is an *open rebellion*.".

"There also lies the answer to those who have since accused Government of precipitating the crisis by the arrest of Mr. Gandhi and the Congress leaders and have suggested that the period of grace referred to by Mr. Gandhi in his Bombay speech should have been utilised for negotiation: 'there is no room left for withdrawal or negotiation', Mr. Gandhi had said a month earlier. Moreover the Wardha resolution merely threatened a mass movement if the demands of Congress were not accepted. The Bombay resolution went further. It no longer *threatened* a movement with the delay that that might entail. It *sanctioned* the movement and if any further delay was intended, are there not at least good grounds for believing in the light of all that had been said, that it was to be used not for the purpose of negotiation but for putting the finishing touches to a plan to which its authors were already committed but which might not yet be completely ready to put into execution?".

I shall presently show that the "famous words" attributed to me are partly a distortion and partly an interpolation not to be found in the authentic report of the Wardha interview as published in *Harijan* of 19th July 1942. Let me

quote in full the portion of the Wardha interview in which that part of the quotation which I claim is distorted appears in its correct form:—

"Do you hope that negotiations may be opened by the British Government?"

"They may, but with whom they will do it I do not know. For it is not a question of placating one party or other. For it is the unconditional withdrawal of the British power without reference to the wishes of any party that is our demand. The demand is therefore based on its justice. Of course it is possible that the British may negotiate a withdrawal. If they do, it will be a feather in their cap. Then it will cease to be a case for withdrawal. If the British see, however late, the wisdom of recognising the Independence of India, without reference to the various parties, all things are possible. But the point I want to stress is this: *viz.*, that THERE IS NO ROOM LEFT FOR NEGOTIATIONS IN THE PROPOSAL FOR WITHDRAWAL. Either they recognise Independence or they don't. After that recognition many things can follow. For by that one single act the British representatives will have altered the face of the whole landscape and revived the hope of the people which has been frustrated times without number. Therefore whenever that great act is performed, on behalf of the British people, it will be a red letter day in the history of India and the world. And, as I have said, it can materially affect the fortunes of war." (Capitals mine.)

(*Harijan*, July 19th, 1942, page 233.)

The corresponding quotation in the indictment I reproduce below in capital letters:

"THERE IS NO ROOM LEFT IN THE PROPOSAL FOR WITHDRAWAL OR NEGOTIATION."

I suggest that in the context from which this is torn and distorted, it is entirely out of place. I was answering the question: "Do you hope that negotiations may be opened by the British Government?" As an answer to the question, the sentence as it appears in *Harijan* "there is no room left for negotiations in the proposal for withdrawal", is perfectly intelligible and harmonises with the sentences preceding and succeeding.

35. The distorted sentence in the indictment has two others tacked on to it. They are: "There is no question of one more chance. After all it is an *open rebellion.*" The italicizing is the author's. The two sentences are not to be found anywhere in the report of the interview as it appears in *Harijan*. "There is no question of one more chance", can have no place in the paragraph about negotiations with my approach to them as revealed in my answer. As to "open rebellion", I have even at the Second Indian Round Table Conference used that expression coupled with the adjective non-violent. But it has no place anywhere in the interview.

36. I have taxed myself to know how the two sentences could have crept into the author's quotation. Fortunately on 26th June, while this reply was being typed there came the *Hindustan Times* file for which Shri Pyarelal had asked. In its issue of 15th July 1942, there appears the following message:

Wardhaganj, July 14th.

"There is no room left in the proposal for withdrawal or negotiation; either they recognise India's independence or they don't" said Mahatma Gandhi answering questions at a Press interview at Sevagram on the Congress resolution. He emphasized that what he wanted was not the recognition of Indian independence on paper, but in action.

Asked if his movement would not hamper war efforts of the United Nations, Mahatma Gandhi said: "The movement is intended not only to help China but also to make common cause with the Allies."

On his attention being drawn to Mr. Amery's latest statement in the House of Commons, Mahatma Gandhi said: "I am very much afraid that we shall have the misfortune to listen to a repetition of that language in stronger terms, but that cannot possibly delay the pace of the people or the group that is determined to go its way." Mahatma Gandhi added: "There is no question of one more chance. After all, it is an open rebellion."

Asked what form his movement would take, Mahatma Gandhi said: "The conception is that of a mass movement on the widest possible scale. It will include what is possible to include in a mass movement or what people are capable of doing. This will be a mass movement of a purely non-violent character."

Asked if he would court imprisonment this time, Mahatma Gandhi said: "It is too soft a thing. There is no such thing as courting imprisonment this time. My intention is to make it as short and swift as possible."

A.P.I.

37. This message is an eye opener for me. I have often suffered from misreporting or coloured epitomes of my writings and speeches even to the point of being lynched. This one, though not quite as bad, is bad enough. The above A.P. summary gives, if it does, the clue to the author's source for the misquotation and the additional sentences. If he used that source, the question arises why he went out of his way to use that doubtful and unauthorised source, when he had before him the authentic text of the full interview in *Harijan* of 19th July last. He has made a most liberal, though disjointed and biased use of the columns of *Harijan* for building up his case against me. At page 13 of the indictment he thus begins the charge culminating in the misquotation at page 14:

"From this point onwards Mr. Gandhi's conception of the struggle developed rapidly. His writings on the subject are too lengthy to quote in full, but the following excerpts from *Harijan* illustrate the direction in which his mind was moving."

On the same page he has quoted passages from page 233 of *Harijan* from the report of the interview in question. I am therefore entitled to conclude that the quotation under examination was taken from *Harijan*. It is manifest now that it was not. Why not? If he took the three sentences from the afore-mentioned A.P. report, why has he quoted them without asterisks between the sentences that appear apart in the A.P. report? I may not pursue the inquiry any further. It has pained me deeply. How the two sentences not found in the authentic text of the interview found place in the A.P. summary I do not know. It is for the Government to inquire, if they will.

38. The author's quotation having been found wanting, the whole of his conclusions and inferences based upon it must fall to the ground. In my opinion therefore the Government does stand accused not only of "having precipitated" but of having invited a crisis by their premeditated coup. The elaborate preparations they made for all-India arrests were not made overnight. It is wrong to draw a distinction between the Wardha resolution and the Bombay one in the sense that the first only *threatened* and the second *sanctioned* the mass civil disobedience. The first only required ratification by the All-India Congress Committee but the effect of either was the same, *i.e.*, both authorised me to lead and guide the movement if negotiations failed. But the movement was not started by the resolution of 8th August last. Before I could function they arrested not only me but principal Congressmen all over India. Thus it was not I but the Government who started the movement and gave it a shape which I could not have dreamt of giving and which it never would have taken while I was conducting it. No doubt it would have been "short and swift", not in the violent sense, as the author has insinuated but in the non-violent sense, as I know it. The Government made it very short and very swift by their very violent action. Had they given me breathing time, I would have sought an interview with the Viceroy and strained every nerve to show the reasonableness of the Congress demand. Thus there were no "grounds", "good" or bad for believing, as the author would have one believe, that the "period of grace" was to be used for "putting the finishing touches to a plan to which its authors were already committed but which might not yet be completely ready to put into execution." In order to sustain such a belief it has become necessary for the author to dismiss from

consideration the whole of the proceedings of the Bombay meeting of the All-India Congress Committee and seven vital parts of its resolution—save the clause referring to the mass movement—and the very awkward word "non-violence" to which I shall come presently.

39. I give below extracts from my speeches and writings to show how eager and earnest I was to avoid conflict and achieve the purpose by negotiation and to show that the Congress aim never was to thwart the Allies in any way:

"....It would be churlish on our part if we said 'we don't want to talk to anybody and we will by our own strong hearts expel the British. Then the Congress Committee won't be meeting; there would be no resolutions; and I should not be seeing press representatives."

(*Harijan*, July 26th, 1942, page 243.)

Q. "Cannot there be any arbitration on the question of Independence?"

A. "No, not on the question of Independence. It is possible only on questions on which sides may be taken. The outstanding question of Independence should be treated as common cause. It is only then that I can conceive possibility of arbitration on the Indo-British question..... But if there is to be any arbitration—and I cannot logically say there should not, for if I did, it would be an arrogation of complete justice on my side—it can be done only if India's Independence is recognised."

(*Harijan*, May 24th, 1942, page 168.)

An English correspondent: ".....Would you advocate arbitration for the Indo-British problem?....."

A. "Any day. I suggested long ago that this question could be decided by arbitration....."

(*Harijan*, May 24th, 1942, page 168.)

The actual struggle does not commence this very moment. You have merely placed certain powers in my hands. My first act will be to wait upon His Excellency the Viceroy and plead with him for the acceptance of the Congress demand. This may take two or three weeks. What are you to do in the meanwhile? I will tell you. There is the spinning wheel. I had to struggle with the Maulana Saheb before it dawned upon him that in a non-violent struggle it had an abiding place. The fourteen-fold constructive programme is all there for you to carry out. But there is something more you have to do and it will give life to that programme. Everyone of you should from this very moment consider yourself a free man or woman and even act as if you are free and no longer under the heel of this Imperialism. This is no make-believe. You have to cultivate the spirit of freedom, before it comes physically. The chains of the slave are broken the moment he considers himself a free man. He will then tell his master: "I have been your slave all these days but I am no longer that now. You may kill me, but if you do not and if you release me from the bondage, I will ask for nothing more from you. For, henceforth instead of depending upon you I shall depend upon God for food and clothing. God has given the urge of freedom and therefore I deem myself a free man.".

You may take it from me that I am not going to strike a bargain with the Viceroy for ministries and the like. I am not going to be satisfied with anything short of complete freedom. May be he will propose the abolition of the salt tax, the drink evil, &c., but I will say, "Nothing less than freedom".

Here is a Mantra—a short one—that I will give you. You may imprint it on your hearts and let every breath of yours give expression to it. The Mantra is this: "We shall do or die. We shall either free India, or die in the attempt. We shall not live to see the perpetuation of slavery." Every true Congressman or woman will join the struggle with an inflexible determination not to remain alive to see the country in bondage and slavery. Let that be your badge. Dismiss jails out of your consideration. If the Government leaves me free, I will spare you the trouble of filling the jails. I will not put on the Government the strain of maintaining a large number of

prisoners at a time when it is in trouble. Let every man and woman live every moment of his or her life hereafter in the consciousness that he or she eats or lives for achieving freedom and will die, if need be, to attain that goal. Take a pledge with God and your own conscience as witness that you will no longer rest till freedom is achieved, and will be prepared to lay down your lives in the attempt to achieve it. He who loses his life shall gain it; he who will seek to save it shall lose it. Freedom is not for the faint-hearted. (From the concluding speech in Hindustani on 8th August before the A.-I.C.C.).

Let me tell you at the outset that the struggle does not commence today. I have yet to go through much ceremonial, as I always do, and this time more than ever because the burden is so heavy. I have yet to continue to reason with those with whom I seem to have lost all credit for the time being. (From the concluding speech in English on 8th August before the A.-I.C.C.).

In the same connection I give extracts from the utterances of Maulana Saheb and others in the Appendix. [*Vide* Appendices V, VI, VII and VIII.]

40. At page 11 of the indictment the author says:—

"To summarise briefly, Mr. Gandhi did not believe that non-violence alone was capable of defending India against Japan. Nor had he any faith in the ability of the Allies to do so: 'Britain', he stated in his draft Allahabad resolution, 'is incapable of defending India'. His 'Quit India' move was intended to result in the withdrawal of the British Government to be succeeded by a problematical provisional government or, as Mr. Gandhi admitted to be possible, by anarchy; the Indian army was to be disbanded: and Allied troops were to be allowed to operate only under the terms imposed by this provisional Government, assisted by India's non-violent non-co-operation to Japan, for which, as Mr. Gandhi had already admitted, there could be little scope with Allied troops operating in India. Finally, even if, in the face of the above arguments, it could be supposed that Mr. Gandhi and the Congress proposed to pin their faith on the ability of Allied troops to defend India, it should be noted that the former himself admitted that the ability of Allied troops to operate effectively would depend upon the formation of a suitable provisional Government. Now since this Government was to be representative of all sections of Indian opinion, it is clear that neither Mr. Gandhi nor the Congress could legitimately commit it in advance to any particular course of action; they could not, that is to say, undertake that it would support the Allies in defending India against Japan. They could not in fact make any promise on behalf of this provisional Government unless they intended that it should be dominated by Congress; the whole trend of Congress policy, however, coupled with the extravagant promises made in the Bombay A.-I.C.C. resolution on behalf of this provisional Government, leave little doubt that this *was* their intention—a view held, significantly, by the Muslim League and Muslims in general. You have then a situation in which the Allied troops would be dependent for support on a Government dominated by a clique which has already been shown to be thoroughly defeatist in outlook, and whose leader had already expressed the intention of negotiating with Japan.

It is not the intention here to examine the third aim, the establishment of communal unity followed by the formation of a provisional Government, at all closely. It has been suggested in the preceding paragraph that the Congress intended this Government to be under their domination and a note has been made of the strength added to this view by the unity of Muslim opinion that the Congress move was aimed at establishing Congress-Hindu domination over India. It will suffice here to show, from Mr. Gandhi's own writings, the doubts that he entertained as to the feasibility of establishing any such Government.".

This brief summary is a perfect caricature of all I have said or written, and the Congress has stood for and expressed in the resolution of 8th August last. I hope I have shown in the foregoing pages how cruelly I have been misrepresented. If my argument has failed to carry conviction, I should be

quite content to be judged on the strength of the quotations interspersed in the argument and those in the appendices hereto attached. As against the foregoing caricature, let me give a summary of my views on the quotations referred to above.

I. I believe that non-violence alone is capable of defending India, not only against Japan but the whole world.

II. I do hold that Britain is incapable of defending India. She is not defending India today; she is defending herself and her interests in India and elsewhere. These are often contrary to India's.

III. "Quit India" move was intended to result in the withdrawal of British Power if possible with simultaneous formation of a provisional Government, consisting of members representing all the principal parties if the withdrawal took place by the willing consent of the British Government. If, however, the withdrawal took place willy-nilly there might be a period of anarchy.

IV. The Indian Army would naturally be disbanded, being British creation—unless it forms part of Allied troops, or it transfers its allegiance to the free India Government.

V. The Allied troops would remain under terms agreed to between the Allied Powers and the free India Government.

VI. If India became free, the free India Government would tender co-operation by rendering such military aid as it could. But in the largest part of India where no military effort was possible, non-violent action will be taken by the masses of the people with the utmost enthusiasm.

41. Then the summary comes to the provisional Government. As to this, let the Congress resolution itself speak. I give the relevant parts below:

"The A.-I.C.C., therefore, repeats with all emphasis the demand for the withdrawal of the British Power from India. On the declaration of India's independence, a provisional Government will be formed and free India will become an ally of the United Nations, sharing with them in the trials and tribulations of the joint enterprise of the struggle for freedom. The provisional Government can only be formed by the co-operation of the principal parties and groups in the country. It will thus be a composite Government, representative of all important sections of the people of India. Its primary functions must be to defend India and resist aggression with all the armed as well as non-violent forces at its command, together with its allied powers, and to promote the well-being and progress of the workers in the fields and factories and elsewhere to whom essentially all power and authority must belong. The provisional Government will evolve a scheme for a Constituent Assembly which will prepare a constitution for the Government of India acceptable to all sections of the people. This constitution, according to the Congress view, should be a federal one with the largest measures of autonomy for the federating units, and with the residuary powers vesting in these units. The future relations between India and the Allied Nations will be adjusted by representatives of all these free countries conferring together for their mutual advantage and for their co-operation in the common task of resisting aggression. Freedom will enable India to resist aggression effectively with the people's united will and strength behind it.

Lastly, whilst the A.-I.C.C. has stated its own view of the future governance under free India, the A.-I.C.C. wishes to make it quite clear to all concerned that by embarking on a mass struggle, it has no intention of gaining power for the Congress. The power, when it comes, will belong to the whole people of India."

I claim that there is nothing in this clause of the resolution that is "extravagant" or impracticable. The concluding sentence proves in my opinion the sincerity and non-party character of the Congress. And as there is no party in the country which is not wholly anti-Fascist, anti-Nazi and anti-Japan it follows that a Government formed by these parties is bound to become an

enthusiastic champion of the Allied cause which by the recognition of India as a free state will truly become the cause of democracy.

42. As to communal unity, it has been a fundamental plank with the Congress from its commencement. Its President is a Muslim divine of world-wide repute, especially in the Muslim world. It has besides him three Muslims on the Working Committee. It is surprising that the author has summoned to his assistance the Muslim League opinion. The League can afford to doubt the sincerity of Congress professions and accuse the Congress of the desire of establishing a "Congress-Hindu domination". It ill becomes the all powerful Government of India to take shelter under the Muslim League wing. This has a strong flavour of the old Imperial Mantra Divide and Rule. League-Congress differences are a purely domestic question. They are bound to be adjusted when foreign domination ends, if they are not dissolved sooner.

43. The author winds up the second chapter as follows:—

"Whether the authors of the resolution genuinely believed that the Congress demand would, if accepted, help rather than hinder the cause of the United Nations and intended that it should have that effect, depends on the answer to two questions. In the first place, could any body of men who honestly desired that result have deliberately called the country, if their way of achieving it was not accepted, to take part in a mass movement the declared object of which was to have precisely the opposite effect by paralysing the whole administration and the whole war effort? In the second place, bearing in mind that less than a year previously it had been proclaimed under Mr. Gandhi's orders to be a 'sin' to help the war with men or money, can it be denied that these men saw their opportunity in Britain's danger and believed that the psychological moment for the enforcement of their political demands must be seized while the fate of the United Nations hung in the balance and before the tide of war turned—if it was ever going to turn—in their favour? The answer to these two questions is left to the reader."

I have to answer these two questions both as reader and accused. As to the first question, there is no necessary inconsistency between the genuine belief that an acceptance of the Congress demand would help the cause of the United Nations, *i.e.*, of democracy all the world over and a mass movement (which moreover was merely contemplated) to paralyse the administration on non-acceptance of the Congress demand. It is submitted that the attempt "to paralyse the administration" on non-acceptance proves the genuineness of the demand. It sets the seal on its genuineness by Congressmen preparing to die in the attempt to paralyse an administration that thwarts their will to fight the combine against democracy. Thus it is the administration's deadset against the Congress which proves the hollowness of its claim that it is engaged in a fight for democracy. My firm belief is that the administration is daily proving its inefficiency for handling the war in the right manner. China is slowly pining away while the administration is playing at war-handling. In the attempt to suppress the Congress it has cut off the greatest source of help to the millions of China who are being ground down under the Japanese heel.

44. The second question hardly demands a separate answer. Congressmen who proclaimed a year ago under my "orders" that it is a "sin" to help the war "men or money" need not be considered here, if I give different "orders". "For me, I am as much opposed to all war today as I was before a year or more. I am but an individual." All Congressmen are not of that mind. The Congress will give up the policy of non-violence today, if it can achieve India's freedom by so doing. And I would have no compunction about inviting those who seek my advice to throw themselves heart and soul into the effort to help themselves and thus deliver from bondage those nations that are wedded to democracy. If that effort involves military training, the people will be free to take it, leaving me and those who think with me our own non-violence. I did this very thing during the Boer War and during the last war. I was a "good boy" then, because

my action harmonised with the British Government's wishes. Today I am the arch enemy, not because I have changed but because the British Government which is being tried in the balance is being found wanting. I helped before, because I believed in British good faith. I appear to be hindering today because the British Government will not act up to the faith that was reposed in them. My answer to the two questions propounded by the author may sound harsh, but it is truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth as God lets me see it.

45. The gravamen, however, of the charges against me is that "every reference to non-violence in the forecasts of the forms the movement would take made by Mr. Gandhi and his Congress disciples and in the post-arrest programmes and instructions is nothing more than a pious hope or at best a mild warning which was known to have no practical value". It is also described as mere "lip service".

46. The author gives no proof to show that it (the warning) "was known to have no practical value". If the references to non-violence are removed from my writings and my utterances in order to condemn me and my "Congress disciples", the removal would be on a par with the omission of "nots" from the commandments and quoting them in support of killing, stealing, &c. The author in robbing me of the one thing I live by and live for robs me of all I possess. The evidence given in support of dismissing references to non-violence as "valueless" mostly consists of innuendoes. "It was to be a struggle, a fight to the finish in which foreign domination was to be ended, cost what it may." In a non-violent struggle the cost has always to be paid by the fighters in their own blood. "It was to be an unarmed revolt, short and swift." The prefix "un" in "unarmed", unless it be regarded as "valueless", gives "short and swift" an ennobling meaning. For, to make the struggle "short and swift" prisons have to be avoided as too soft a thing and death to be hugged as a true friend enabling the fighters to affect opponents' heart much quicker than mere jail going can. Mention by me of "conflagratio" meant *giving* of lives in thousands or more, if need be. The author has called it a "grimly accurate forecast". This has a *post-facto* meaning unintended by the author in that a heavy toll of lives was taken by way of reprisals by the authorities, and an orgy of unmentionable excesses let loose upon the people by the soldiery and the police, if the press reports and statements by responsible public men are to be believed. "Mr. Gandhi was prepared to risk the occurrence of riots." It is true that I was prepared to take such a risk. Any big movement whether violent or non-violent involves certain risks. But non-violent running of risks means a special method, a special handling. I would have strained every nerve to avoid riots. Moreover, my first act would have been to woo the Viceroy. Till then no question of running any risks could arise. As it was, the Government would not let me run the risk. They put me in prison instead! What the mass movement was to include and how the risk was to be taken, if at all, the author could not know for the movement was never started. Nor had any instructions been issued by me.

47. The author complains of my "making full use of existing grievances". The use began even before the birth of the Congress. It has never ceased. How could it, so long as the foreign domination, of which they were a part, lasted?

48. "Finally every man and woman was to consider himself free and act for himself. These last words or at least their sense finds a place in the resolution itself." This last sentence is a specimen of *suppressio veri*. Here is the relevant extract from the Congress resolution:—

"They must remember that non-violence is the basis of this movement. A time may come when it may not be possible to issue instructions or for instructions to reach our people, and when no Congress Committees can function. When this happens every man and woman who is participating in this movement must function for himself or herself within the four corners of the general instructions issued. Every Indian who desires freedom and strives for it must be his own

guide urging him on along the hard road where there is no resting place and which leads ultimately to the independence and deliverance of India".

There is nothing new or startling in this. It is practical wisdom. Men and women must become their own leaders when their trusted guides are removed from them, or when their organisation is declared illegal or otherwise ceases to function. True, there were formerly nominal "dictators" appointed. This was more to court arrest than to guide followers by being in touch with them. For, touch was not possible except secretly. This time not prison but death was to be sought in the prosecution of the movement. Therefore, everyone was to become his own leader to act within the four corners of the square foundation—non-violence. The omission of the two conditions for everyone becoming his or her own guide was an unpardonable suppression of relevant truth.

49. The author then proceeds to consider whether the movement contemplated by me could, by its very nature, be non-violent and further whether "Mr. Gandhi (I) intended that it should be so or hoped that it would remain so." I have already shown that the movement never having been started, nobody could say what I had contemplated or hoped unless my intention or my hope could be justly deduced from my writings. Let me however observe how the author has arrived at this conclusion. His first proof is that I have employed military terms in connection with a movement claimed to be wholly non-violent. I have employed such language from the commencement of my experiment in South Africa. I could more easily show the contrast between my move and the ordinary ones by using identical phraseology, so far as possible, and coupling it with non-violence. Throughout my experience of Satyagraha since 1908, I cannot recall an instance in which people were misled by me by my use of military phraseology. And, indeed, Satyagraha being a "moral equivalent of war", the use of such terminology is but natural. Probably all of us have used at some time or another, or are at least familiar with, expressions such as "Sword of the spirit", "dynamite of truth", "shield and buckler of patience", "assaulting the citadel of truth", or "wrestling with God". Yet no one has ever seen anything strange or wrong in such use. Who can be ignorant of the use of military phraseology by the Salvation Army? That body has taken it over in its entirety, and yet I have not known any one having mistaken the Salvation Army with its colonels and captains for a military organisation trained to the use of deadly weapons of destruction.

50. I must deny that "it has been shown that Mr. Gandhi had little faith in the effectiveness of non-violence to resist Japanese aggression". What I have said is that maximum effectiveness cannot be shown when it has to work side by side with violence. It is true that Maulana Saheb and Pandit Nehru have doubts about the efficacy of non-violence to withstand aggression but they have ample faith in non-violent action for fighting against British domination. I do believe that both British and Japanese Imperialisms are equally to be avoided. But I have already shown by quoting from *Harijan* that it is easier to cope with the evil that is, than the one that may come. [*Vide* Appendix II (D.).]

51. I admit at once that there is "a doubtful proportion of full believers" in my "theory of non-violence". But it should not be forgotten that I have also said that for my movement I do not at all need believers in the theory of non-violence; full or imperfect. It is enough if people carry out the rules of non-violent action. [*Vide* Appendix IV (A.).]

52. Now comes the author's most glaring lapse of memory or misrepresentation in the paragraph under discussion. He says, "..... remember too that he had before him the example of his previous movements, each professedly non-violent, yet each giving rise to the most hideous violence." I have before me a list of 20 civil resistance movements beginning with the very first in South Africa. I do recall instances in which popular frenzy had broken out resulting in regrettable murders. These instances of mob violence, though bad enough, were but a flea-bite in proportion to the vast size of this country—as big as Europe

less Russia territorially and bigger numerically. Had violence been the Congress policy, secretly or openly, or had the Congress discipline been less strict, it is simple enough to realise that the violence, instead of being a flea-bite, would have been more like a volcanic eruption. But every time such outbreaks took place the most energetic measures were taken by the whole Congress organisation to deal with them. On several occasions I had myself resorted to fasting. All this produced a salutary effect on the popular mind. And there were also movements which were singularly free from violence. Thus the South African Satyagraha, which was a mass movement and similar movements in Champaran, Kheda, Bardoli and Borsad—not to mention others in which collective civil disobedience on a wide scale was offered—were wholly free from any outburst of violence. In all these the people had conformed to the rules laid down for their observance. The author has thus gone against history in making the sweeping statement that I had before me the "example of previous movements each professedly non-violent, yet each giving rise to the most hideous violence". My own experience being quite to the contrary, I have not the shadow of a doubt that if the Government had not by their summary action unnecessarily provoked the people beyond endurance, there never would have been any violence. The members of the Working Committee were anxious that violence on the part of the people should be avoided, not from any philanthropic motive, but from the conviction borne in upon them from the experience of hard facts, that violence by the people could not usher in Independence. The education that the people had received through the Congress was wholly non-violent, before 1920, because of the Leaders' belief in constitutional agitation and faith in British promises and declarations, and since 1920, because of the belief, in the first instance induced by me and then enforced by experience, that mere constitutional agitation, though it had served up to a point, could never bring in Independence, and that regard being had to the condition of India, non-violent action was the only sanction through which independence could be attained in the quickest manner possible. The accumulated experience of the past thirty years, the first eight of which were in South Africa, fills me with the greatest hope that in the adoption of non-violence lies the future of India and the world. It is the most harmless and yet equally effective way of dealing with the political and economic wrongs of the down-trodden portion of humanity. I have known from early youth that non-violence is not a cloistered virtue to be practised by the individual for his peace and final salvation, but it is a rule of conduct for society if it is to live consistently with human dignity and make progress towards the attainment of peace for which it has been yearning for ages past. It is therefore sad to think that a Government, the most powerful in the world, should have belittled the doctrine and put its votaries, however imperfect they may be, out of action. It is my firm opinion that thereby they have injured the cause of universal peace and the Allied Nations.

53. For the author "the certainty" was "that his (my) movement could not remain non-violent". For me "the certainty" was quite the contrary, if the moment had remained in the hands of those who could guide the people.

54. It is also now "clear" what I meant when I said I was prepared to go to the extremest limit, that is that I would continue the non-violent movement even though the Government might succeed in provoking violence. Hitherto I have stayed my hand when people have been so provoked. This time I ran the risk because the risk of remaining supine in the face of the greatest world conflagration known to history was infinitely greater. If non-violence be the greatest force in the world, it must prove itself during the crisis.

55. The final proof given by the author of my non-violence being "mere lip service" consists of the following caricature of my writing in defence of Polish bravery:—

"In other words in any fight the weaker of the two combatants may employ as violent measures as he likes or is able, and may still be considered to be fighting non-violently; or to put it in another way, violence when employed

against superior odds automatically becomes non-violence. Surely a very convenient theory for the rebels in an "unarmed revolt."

I claim the writing quoted by the author does not warrant the misleading deduction. How can I possibly lay down a proposition against every day experience? There is rarely a fight among absolute equals. One party is always weaker than the other. The illustrations I have given, taken together, can lead to one conclusion only, namely, that the weaker party does not make any preparation for offering violence for the simple reason that the intention is absent, but when he is suddenly attacked he uses unconsciously, even without wishing to do so, any weapon that comes his way. The first illustration chosen by me is that of a man who having a sword uses it single-handed against a horde of dacoits. The second is that of a woman using her nails and teeth or even a dagger in defence of her honour. She acts spontaneously. And the third is that of a mouse fighting a cat with its sharp teeth. These three illustrations were specially chosen by me in order to avoid any illegitimate deduction being drawn in defence of offering studied violence. One infallible test is that such a person is never successful in the sense of overpowering the aggressor. He or she dies and saves his or her honour rather than surrender to the demands of the aggressor. I was so guarded in the use of my language that I described the defence of the Poles against overwhelming numbers as "almost non-violence". In further elucidation of this see discussion with a Polish friend. [*Vide* Appendix IV (M.).]

56. Here it will be apposite to give extracts from my speeches bearing on non-violence on the 7th and 8th August last before the All-India Congress Committee at Bombay:—

"Let me, however, hasten to assure you that I am the same Gandhi as I was in 1920. I have not changed in any fundamental respect. I attach the same importance to non-violence that I did then. If at all, my emphasis on it has grown stronger. There is no real contradiction between the present resolution and my previous writings and utterances. .....Occasions like the present do not occur in everybody's and but rarely in anybody's life. I want you to know and I feel that there is nothing but purest *ahimsa* in all that I am saying and doing today. The draft resolution of the Working Committee is based on *ahimsa*, the contemplated struggle similarly has its roots in *ahimsa*. If therefore there is any among you who has lost faith in *ahimsa* or is wearied of it, let him not vote for this resolution.

* * * * *

Let me explain my position clearly. God has vouchsafed to me a priceless gift in the weapon of *ahimsa*. I and my *ahimsa* are on our trial today. If in the present crisis, when the earth is being scorched by the flames of *himsa* and crying for deliverance, I failed to make use of the God-given talent, God will not forgive me and I shall be adjudged unworthy of the great gift. I must act now. I may not hesitate and merely look on when Russia and China are threatened.

* * * * *

.....Ours is not a drive for power but purely a non-violent fight for India's independence. In a violent struggle a successful general has been often known to effect a military coup and set up a dictatorship. But under the Congress scheme of things, essentially non-violent as it is, there can be no room for dictatorship. A non-violent soldier of freedom will covet nothing for himself, he fights only for the freedom of his country. The Congress is unconcerned as to who will rule when freedom is attained. The power, when it comes, will belong to the people of India, and it will be for them to decide to whom it should be entrusted. May be that the reins will be placed in the hands of the Parsis for instance—as I would love to see happen—or they may be handed to some others whose names are not heard in the Congress today. It will not be for you then to object saying, "This community is microscopic. That party did not play its due part in the freedom's struggle; why should it have all the power?" Ever since its inception the Congress has kept itself meticulously free of the communal

taint. It has thought always in terms of the whole nation and acted accordingly.

* * * * *

.....I know how imperfect our *ahimsa* is and how far away we are still from the ideal, but in *ahimsa* there is no final failure or defeat. I have faith therefore that if, in spite of our shortcomings, the big thing does happen, it will be because God wanted to help us by crowning with success our silent, unremitting *adhana*[1] (striving) for the last twenty-two years.

* * * * *

.....I believe that in the history of the world there has not been a more genuinely democratic struggle for freedom than ours. I read Carlyle's *History of the French Revolution* while I was in prison, and Pandit Jawaharlal has told me something about the Russian revolution. But it is my conviction that inasmuch as these struggles were fought with the weapon of violence they failed to realise the democratic ideal. In the democracy which I have envisaged, a democracy established by non-violence, there will be equal freedom for all. Everybody will be his own master. It is to join a struggle for such democracy that I invite you today. Once you realise this you will forget the differences between Hindus and Muslims and think of yourselves as Indians only, engaged in the common struggle for independence." (From the Hindustani speech on 7th August before the All-India Congress Committee.)

* * * * *

After describing personal relations with the Viceroy, the late Deenabandhu C. F. Andrews and the Metropolitan of Calcutta, I proceeded:

With the background of this consciousness I want to declare to the world that whatever may be said to the contrary and although I may have today forfeited the regard of many friends in the West and even the trust of some—even for their love and friendship I must not suppress the voice within..... That something in me which has never deceived me tells me that I shall have to fight on even though the whole world be against me.

* * * * *

.....I hold that there can be no real freedom without non-violence. This is not the language of a proud or an arrogant man but of an earnest seeker after truth. It is this fundamental truth with which the Congress has been experimenting for the last twenty-two years. Unconsciously, from its very inception the Congress has based its policy on non-violence known in those early days as the constitutional method. Dadabhoy and Pherozeshah Mehta carried Congress India with them. They were lovers of Congress. They were, therefore, also its masters. But above all, they were true servants of the nation. They became rebels. But they never countenanced murder, secrecy and the like. Subsequent generations have added to this heritage and expanded their political philosophy into the principle and policy of non-violent non-co-operation which the Congress has adopted. It is not my claim that every Congressman conforms to the highest tenet of non-violence even as a policy. I know that there are several black sheep, but I am taking all on trust without subjecting them to cross-examination. I trust, because I have faith in the innate goodness of human nature which enables people instinctively to perceive the truth and carries them through crisis. It is this fundamental trust which rules my life, and enables me to hope that India as a whole will vindicate the principle of non-violence during the coming struggle. But even if my trust is found to be misplaced I shall not flinch. I shall not abandon my faith. I shall only say, "The lesson is not yet fully learnt. I must try again".

(From the English speech on 8th August.)

* * * * *

The Congress has no sanction but the moral for enforcing its decisions. I believe that true democracy can only be an outcome of non-violence. The structure of a world federation can be raised only on a foundation of non-violence, and violence will have to be totally given up in world affairs. Solution of the Hindu-Muslim question too, cannot be achieved by resort to violence. If Hindus

tyrannise over Mussalmans, with what face will they talk of a world federation? It is for the same reason that the Congress has agreed to submit all differences to an impartial tribunal and to abide by its decisions.

In *Satyagraha* there is no place for fraud or falsehood. Fraud and falsehood are today stalking the world. I cannot be a helpless witness of such a situation. I have travelled all over India as perhaps nobody in the present age has. The voiceless millions of the land saw in me their friend and representative, and I identified myself with them to the extent it was possible for a human being to do so. I saw trust in their eyes, which I now want to turn to good account in fighting this Empire, which is built on and upheld by untruth and violence. However tight the Empire's control of us, we must get out of it. I know how imperfect an instrument I am for this great task, and how imperfect is the material with which I have to work. But how can I remain silent at this supreme hour and hide my light under a bushel? Shall I ask the Japanese to tarry a while? If today I sit quiet inactive in the midst of this conflagration which is enveloping the whole world, God will take me to task for not making use of the treasure He has given me. But for this conflagration I should have asked you to wait a little longer, as I have done all these years. The situation has now become intolerable, and the Congress has no other course left for it. (From the concluding speech in Hindustani on 8th August.)

57. Having given proof against me to show that my professions about non-violence were "valueless", the author turns to my colleagues in the Congress High Command to observe how they interpreted my "views to their Congress followers and to the masses". The author sees objection in Pandit Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Shri Shankerrao Deo having singled out the student community for attention. Attention paid to the student community and peasantry was no new thing introduced for the first time, for the sake of the struggle, in the history of the Congress. As early as 1920 students were specially invited to join the non-co-operation movement and several thousand had responded to the call by suspending their studies. I do not know what happened after the August arrests, in the Benares Hindu University. But assuming that some students belonging to it went astray, that is no ground for associating Pandit Nehru with their acts. Positive proof would be necessary to establish such connection. Overwhelming proof can be produced in support of the contention that his faith in non-violence for the purpose of achieving *Swaraj*, is inferior to nobody's. The same thing can be said about his exhortation to the *Kisans* of the United Provinces. There is too nothing in favour of violence in the other leaders' speeches so far as one can judge from the extracts given in the indictment.

58. Having dealt with the leaders' speeches, the author comes to "detailed instructions regarding the conduct of the movement in existence before the All-India Congress Committee meeting in Bombay". The "first example" has been "chosen" from *Harijan* of August 9th. The article is entitled "Ways of non-violent non-co-operation". As it happens, it is a discussion in connection with the threatened invasion from Japan. Thus the article opens:—

"Ever since 1920 we are familiar with some of the ways of offering non-violent non-co-operation. These included boycott of all Government institutions and services and extended to the non-payment of taxes. They were directed against a foreign Government in occupation of the country for years. The ways of non-co-operation to adopt against a new foreign invader would naturally differ in details. It would as Gandhiji has said extend to the refusal of food or water. All non-co-operation calculated to make the functioning of the enemy impossible has to be resorted to within the limits of non-violence."

Then the writer of the article (M.D.) has given samples of non-violent non-co-operation offered elsewhere than in India. They are not examples of non-violence consciously exercised. That the whole article was written to show what could be non-violently done to repel the invader, is clear from the final paragraph:—

"What one has to remember is that in war repression would be ten times as severe as was resorted to in France, but if there is the will to suffer, the

resoureefulness to devise ways and means on the lines indicated in these different instances of passive resistance, and above all the determination to drive out the invader, cost what it may, victory is certain. The vastness of our country, far from being a disadvantage, may be an advantage, as the invader would find it difficult to cope with resistance on a thousand and one fronts."
The theme of the article is not racial but anti-invader.

59. The other example given by the author is an extract from an article by Shri K. G. Mashruwalla in *Harijan* of 23rd August 1942. Shri Mashruwalla is a valued co-worker. He carries non-violence to an extreme which baffles those who know him intimately. Nevertheless I do not propose to defend the paragraph quoted. He has guarded himself by saying that it represents his personal opinion only. He must have heard me debating the question whether interference with bridges, rails and the like could be classified as non-violent. I had always questioned the practicability of the interference being non-violent. Even if such interference could conceivably be non-violent, as I hold it can be, it is dangerous to put it before the masses who cannot be expected to do such things non-violently. Nor would I expect the classification of the British Power in the same category as the Japanese for the purposes of the movement.

60. Having allowed myself to criticise the opinion of a respected colleague I wish to say that Shri Mashruwalla's opinion is no evidence of violent intention. At best it is an error of judgment which is much more likely in a novel subject like the applicability of *ahimsa* practised in all walks of life by masses of mankind. Great generals and statesmen have been known before now to have committed errors of judgment without losing caste or being accused of evil intentions.

61. Then comes the Andhra circular. I must regard it as forbidden ground for me inasmuch as I knew nothing about it before my arrest. Therefore I can only comment on it with reserve. Subject to that caution I consider the document to be harmless on the whole. This is its governing clause:—

"The whole movement is based on non-violence. No act which contravenes these instructions should even be undertaken. All acts of disobedience committed should be overt never covert (open but not under cover)".
The parenthesis is in the original. The following warning is also embodied in the circular:—

"Ninety-nine chances out of hundred chances are for the inauguration of this movement by Mahatmaji at an early date; possibly a few hours after the next All-India Congress Committee meeting at Bombay. The D.C.Cs. should be alert and begin to act immediately, but please also take note that no movement should be launched or any overt act done till Mahatmaji decides. After all he may decide otherwise and you will be responsible for a great unwarranted mistake. Be ready, organise at once, be alert, but by no means act."

As to the body of the circular, I could not make myself responsible for some of the items. But I must refuse to judge a thing which I cannot correct, especially in the absence of what the Committee has to say on them, assuming of course that the circular is an authentic document. I miss in the indictment the text of the alleged "written amendment" "raising" the ban on the removal of rails.

62. Attention is then drawn to the fifth appendix showing how my mind was working in the direction of violence under the "valueless" cover of non-violence, as the author would say. The appendix gives what purport to be All-India Congress Committee instructions with extracts from my writings in parallel columns. I have tried to study that appendix. I have nothing to withdraw from writings. And I contend that there is not a trace of violence in the instructions alleged to be from the All-India Congress Committee.

63. Independently of the argument in the indictment, I must now say something about non-violence as I know it. Its spread in all walks of life has been my mission from early youth. This covers a period of very nearly sixty years. It was adopted at my instance as a policy by the Congress in 1920. In its very

nature it was not meant to be paraded before the world, but it was accepted as a means indispensable for the attainment of *Swaraj*. Congresmen saw at an early date that its mere adoption on paper had no value. It was of use only in so far as it was put into practice individually and collectively. It was of no more use as a badge than a rifle in the hands of a person who did not know how to use it effectively on due occasion. Therefore if non-violence has raised the Congress prestige and popularity since its adoption it has done so in exact proportion to its use, even as the power which the rifle gives to its possessor is in exact proportion to its effective use. The comparison cannot be carried very far. Thus while violence is directed towards the injury, including the destruction of the aggressor, and is successful only when it is stronger than that of the opponent, non-violent action can be taken in respect of an opponent, however powerfully organised for violence. Violence *per se* of the weak has never been known to succeed against the stronger in violence. Success of non-violent action of the very weak is a daily occurrence. I make bold to say that I have applied to the present struggle the principles of non-violence as enunciated here. Nothing could be farther from my thought than injury to the person or property of those who are manning and regulating the machinery of British Imperialism as it operates in India. My non-violence draws a fundamental distinction between the man and his machine. I would destroy a harmful machine without compunction, never the man. And this rule I have enforced in my dealings with my nearest relatives as also friends and associates, not without considerable success.

64. After disposing of non-violence the author has summarised what he calls the "ostensible aims" of the Wardha resolution of July 14th and the Bombay resolution of August 8th as follows:—

"Three main *ostensible* aims are common to both the Wardha resolution of July 14th (Appendix III-1) and the Bombay resolution of August 8th (Appendix III-2). These are:—

(1) To remove foreign domination over India.

(2) To check the growing ill-will against Britain, with its danger of passive acceptance by the masses of aggression against India; to build up a spirit of resistance to aggression among Indians; and by granting India's millions immediate freedom to release that energy and enthusiasm which alone can enable India to play an effective part in her own defence and in the war as a whole.

(3) To achieve unity, by the removal of the foreign power with its policy of divide and rule, which will be followed by the formation of a Provisional Government representative of all sections of the Indian people.

Three further aims appeared for the first time in the Bombay resolution:—

(4) To bring all subject and oppressed humanity to the side of the United Nations, thus giving these nations the moral and spiritual leadership of the world.

(5) To assist Asiatic nations under foreign domination to regain their freedom and to ensure that they are not again placed under the rule of any colonial power.

(6) To bring about world federation, which would ensure the disbanding of national armies, navies and air forces, and the pooling of the world's resources for the common good of all."

He says that "the genuineness of the first of these aims is undeniable. The freedom of India, in whatever terms it may have been expressed, has long been the main goal of the Congress and it has been shown above how this aim coincides with one of the main motives underlying the 'Quit India' move". Strange as it appears to me, notwithstanding this admission of the genuiness of the first aim, he ridicules the others in some shape or form. I contend that all the others follow from the first. Thus if the foreign domination goes by agreement, ill-will against Britain is automatically turned into goodwill, and the energy of millions is set free on behalf of the Allied cause. Similarly communal unity must follow as day follows night when the night of foreign domination is gone. If nearly four hundred million people become free, other portions of oppressed humanity must also become free and naturally the Allied Nations being privy to this freedom,

the moral and spiritual leadership of the world comes to them without seeking. The fifth aim is included in the fourth, and the sixth is but a repetition of the aim of the whole of humanity which it must attain or perish without. It is true that the three last aims were added in Bombay. That surely is not a matter to cavil at. Even if they were a result of criticism, what is there wrong about it? No democratic organisation can afford to defy criticism, for it has to live upon the fresh air of criticism. As a matter of fact, however, world federation and rights of non-white people are no new ideas for Congressmen. They have been mentioned in Congress resolutions on other occasions. The paragraph above. world federation found place in the August resolution at the instance of a European friend, and about non-white people at mine.

65. As to the disturbances that took place after the arrests of 9th August I have carefully read Chapters IV and V of the indictment detailing them as also the appendices purporting to be instructions from various bodies. I must refuse to judge these one-sided statements or unverified documents. As to the so-called instructions, I can say that, so far as they are contrary to non-violence, they can never have my approval.

66. One searches in vain in the indictment for a detailed account of the measures taken by the Government by way of reprisals. And if one is to believe what has been allowed to appear in the Press about these measures, the so-called misdeeds of exasperated people, whether they can be described as Congressmen or not, pale into insignificance.

67. Now for the responsibility for the happenings after the wholesale arrests of 9th August last. The most natural way to look at the disturbances is that they broke out after the arrests which were therefore the cause. The indictment has been framed for the sole purpose, as the title shows, of fastening the responsibility on the Congress. The argument seems to me to be this. First I and then the Congress had been setting the stage for a mass movement since April 1942 when I first bruited the idea of British withdrawal popularly known as "Quit India". Mass movement was bound to result in the outbreak of violence. I and the Congressmen who had accepted my guidance had intended that violence should take place. Leaders had been preaching it. Hence the disturbances were to take place in any case. The arrest therefore merely anticipated the violent movement and nipped it in the bud. This sums up the reasoning in the indictment.

68. I have endeavoured to show that no special stage for a mass movement was set or contemplated because of my proposal for British withdrawal, that violence was never contemplated by me or any Congress leader, that I had declared that, if Congressmen indulged in an orgy of violence, they might not find me alive in their midst, that the mass movement was never started by me, the sole charge for starting it was vested in me, that I had contemplated negotiations with the Government, that I was to start the movement only on failure of negotiations and that I had envisaged an interval of "two or three weeks" for the negotiations. It is therefore clear that but for the arrests no such disturbances would have taken place as happened on 9th August last and after. I would have strained every nerve first to make the negotiations successful and secondly, if I had failed, to avoid disturbances. The Government would have been no less able to suppress them than they were in August last. Only they would have had some case against me and the Congress. It was the duty of the Government, before taking action, to study the speeches of the Congress leaders and myself at the All-India Congress Committee meeting.

69. The Congress leaders were desirous that the movement should remain non-violent, if only because they knew that no violent movement in the existing circumstances could possibly succeed when matched against a most powerfully equipped Government. Whatever violence was committed by people, whether Congressmen or others, was therefore committed in spite of the leaders' wishes. If it is held otherwise by the Government it should be proved beyond doubt before an impartial tribunal. But why seek to shift the responsibility when the cause

is patent? The Government action in enforcing India-wide arrests was so violent that the populace which was in sympathy with the Congress lost self-control. The loss of self-control cannot imply Congress complicity but it does imply that the power of endurance of human nature has limitations. If Government action was in excess of the endurance of human nature, it and therefore its authors were responsible for the explosions that followed. But the Government may assert that the arrests were necessary. If so, why should the Government fight shy of taking the responsibility for the consequences of their action? The wonder to me is that the Government at all need to justify their action when they know their will is law.

70. Let me analyse the system of Government in vogue here. A population numbering nearly four hundred millions of people, belonging to an ancient civilisation, are being ruled by a British representative called Viceroy and Governor-General aided by 250 officials called Collectors and supported by a strong British garrison with a large number of Indian soldiers, trained by British officers, and carefully isolated from the populace. The Viceroy enjoys within his own sphere powers much larger than the King of England. Such powers, as far as I know, are not enjoyed by any other person in the world. The Collectors are miniature Viceroys in their own spheres. They are first and foremost, as their name implies, collectors of revenue in their own districts and have magisterial powers. They can requisition the military to their aid when they think necessary. They are also political agents for the small chiefstains within their jurisdiction, and they are in the place of overlords to them.

71. Contrast this with the Congress, the most truly democratic organisation in the world—not because of its numerical strength, but because its only sanction deliberately adopted is non-violence. From its inception the Congress has been a democratic body, seeking to represent all India. However feeble and imperfect the attempt may have been, the Congress has never in its history of now nearly sixty years shifted its gaze from the Pole Star of India's freedom. It has progressed from stage to stage in its march towards democracy in the truest term. If it is said, as it has been, that the Congress learnt the spirit of democracy from Great Britain, no Congressman would care to deny the statement, though it must be added that the roots were to be found in the old Panchayat system. It can never brook Nazi, Fascist or Japanese domination. An organisation whose very breath is freedom, and which pits itself against the most powerfully organised Imperialism will perish to a man in the attempt to resist all domination. So long as it clings to non-violence, it will be uncrushable and unconquerable.

72. What can be the cause of the extraordinary resentment against the Congress into which the Government have betrayed themselves? I have never known them before to exhibit so much irritation. Does the cause lie in the "Quit India" formula? Disturbances cannot be the cause, because the resentment began to show itself soon after the publication of my proposal for British withdrawal. It crystallized into the wholesale arrests of 9th August last which were prearranged and merely awaited the passing of the resolution of 8th August. Yet there was nothing novel in the resolution save the "Quit India" formula. Mass movements have been known to be on the Congress programme ever since 1920. But freedom seemed elusive. Now the Hindu-Muslim disunity, now the pledges to the Princes, now the interests of the scheduled classes, now the vested interests of Europeans barred the gateway to freedom. Divide and rule was an inexhaustible well. The sands of time were running out. Rivers of blood were flowing fast among the warring nations, and politically-minded India was looking on helplessly—the masses were inert. Hence the cry of "Quit India". It gave body to the freedom movement. The cry was unanswerable. Those who were anxious to play their part in the world crisis found vent in that cry of anguish. Its root is in the will to save democracy from Nazism as well as Imperialism. For, satisfaction of the Congress demand meant assurance of victory of democracy over any combination of reactionary forces and deliverance of China and Russia from the menace of Japan and Germany respectively. But the demand

irritated the Government. They distrusted those who were associated with the demand and thereby they themselves became the greatest impediment to the war effort. It is wrong therefore to accuse the Congress of hindering war effort. Congress activity up to the night of 8th August was confined to resolutions only. The dawn of the 9th saw the Congress imprisoned. What followed was a direct result of the Government action.

73. The resentment over what I hold to be a just and honourable desire confirms the popular suspicion about the *bona fides* of the Government's professions about democracy and freedom after the war. If the Government were sincere they would have welcomed the offer of help made by the Congress. Congressmen who have been fighting for India's liberty for over half a century would have flocked to the Allied banner as one man for the defence of India's freedom newly won. But the Government did not wish to treat India as an equal partner and ally. They put out of action those who made this demand. Some of them are even being hounded as if they were dangerous criminals. I have in mind Shri Jaiprakash Narayan and other like him. A reward of Rs. 5,000 now doubled, has been promised to the informant who would show his hiding place. I have taken Shri Jaiprakash Narayan purposely as my illustration because, as he very rightly says, he differs from me on several fundamentals. But my differences, great as they are, do not blind me to his indomitable courage and his sacrifice of all that a man holds dear for the love of his country. I have read his manifesto which is given as an appendix to the indictment. Though I cannot subscribe to some of the views expressed therein, it breathes nothing but burning patriotism and his impatience of foreign domination. It is a virtue of which any country would be proud.

74. So much for politically-minded Congressmen. In the constructive department of the Congress also the Government have deprived themselves of the best talent in the country for the organisation of hand industries which are so vital a need in war time. The All-India Spinners Association, which is responsible for having distributed without fuss over 3 crores of rupees as wages among the poor villagers whom no one had reached and whose labour was being wasted, has come in for a heavy hand. Its President Shri Jajuji and many of his co-workers have been imprisoned without trial and without any known reason. Khadi centres which are trust property have been confiscated to the Government. I do not know the law under which such property can be confiscated. And the tragedy is that the confiscators are themselves unable to run these centres which were producing and distributing cloth. Khadi and *charkhas* have been reported to have been burnt by the authorities. The All-India Village Industries Association worked by Kumarappa brothers has also received much the same treatment. Shri Vinoba Bhave is an institution by himself. Many workers were incessantly doing creative labour under his guidance. Most men and women of constructive organisations are not political workers. They are devoted to constructive work of the highest merit. And if some of them have found it necessary to appear at all on the political field, it is a matter for the Government to reflect upon. To put such organisations and their supervisors under duress is in my opinion an unpardonable interference with war effort. The self-satisfaction with which the highest officials proclaim that limitless men and material are being had from this unhappy land, is truly amazing, while the inhabitants of India are suffering from shortage of food, clothing and many other necessaries of life. I make bold to say that this scarcity would have been largely minimised if not altogether obviated, if instead of imprisoning Congress workers throughout India, the Government had utilised their services. The Government had two striking illustrations of the efficient working by the Congress agency—I mean the handling of the disastrous Bihar earthquake by Congressmen under Dr. Rajendra Prasad and of the equally disastrous flood in Gujarat under Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

75. This brings me to the end of my reply to the indictment. It has become much longer than I had wanted to make it. It has cost me and my co-workers in the camp no end of labour. Although I must ask, in fairness to myself and the

cause I reprseent, for the publication of this reply, my chief purpose is to carry conviction to the Government that the indictment contains no proof of the allegations against the Congress and me. The Government know that the public in India seem to have distrusted the indictment and regarded it as designed for foreign propaganda. Men like Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and the Rt. Hon. Shri M. R. Jayakar have given their opinion that the "evidence" produced in the indictment is of no judicial value. Therefore the Government should withdraw the indictment. I see from the preface to the indictment that the Government have in their possession "valuable evidence", presumably incriminating the detenus. I submit that if the Government cannot safely divulge the evidence, they should discharge the detenus and bring to book those, who after discharge, may be caught in the act of committing or promoting crimes. With limitless power at their back, they need not resort to unsustainable accusations.

76. It will be noticed that although the indictment is a Government publication, I have only criticised its unknown author in the fond hope that the individual members composing the Government of India have not read the originals on which it is based. For, I am of opinion that no one having a knowledge of the originals could possibly endorse the inferences and innuendoes with which it is replete.

77. Lastly, I wish to state that if I have anywhere erred in analysing the indictment, and if my error is pointed out to me, I shall gladly correct myself. I have simply written as I have felt.

I am, &c.,
M. K. GANDHI.

APPENDIX I.
BRITISH WITHDRAWAL.

"In its earlier stages Mr. Gandhi's 'Quit India' move was meant and was widely interpreted as a proposal for the physical withdrawal from India of the British, and of all British and Allied troops." Indictment p. 2.

CONFUSION.

(A) There is evidently confusion in some minds about my invitation to the British to withdraw. For a Britisher writes to say that he likes India and her people and would not like willingly to leave India. He likes too my method of non-violence. Evidently the writer has confused the individual as such with the individual as the holder of power. India has no quarrel with the British people. I have hundreds of British friends. Andrews' friendship was enough to tie me to the British people. But both he and I were fixed in our determination that the British rule in India in any shape or form must end. Hitherto the rulers have said, "We would gladly retire if we know to whom we should hand over the reins". My answer now is, "Leave India to God. If that is too much, then leave her to anarchy." I invite every Britisher who loves Britain, India and the world to join me in the appeal to the British Power and, if it is rejected, to adopt such non-violent measures as would compel the Power to comply with the appeal.

Harijan, May 24th, 1942. p. 161.

OUT OF TOUCH.

(B) I am showing the futility of hatred. I am showing that hatred injures the hater never the hated. An Imperial Power cannot act otherwise than it has been doing. If we are strong the British becomes powerless. I am therefore trying to wean the people from their hatred by asking them to develop strength of mind to invite the British to withdraw and at the same time to resist the Japanese. With the British withdrawal the incentive to welcome the Japanese goes and the strength felt in securing British withdrawal will be used for stemming the Japanese inroad. I endorse C. R.'s proposition that

the millions of India can resist the Japanese even without the possession of arms, modern and ancient, if they are properly organised. I differ from him when he says that this can be done even when the British arms are operating without co-ordination when you force yourself on the British Power. Experience teaches us that hearty co-ordination and co-operation is impossible where mutual trust and respect are wanting. British presence invites the Japanese, it promotes communal disunion and other discords, and what is perhaps the worst of all, deepens the hatred born of impotence. Orderly British withdrawal will turn the hatred into affection and will automatically remove communal distemper. So far as I can see the two communities are unable to think or see things in their proper perspective as long as they are under the influence of the third power.

Harijan, May 31st, 1942. p. 175.

FREE INDIA CAN HELP BEST.

(C) Answering to the question of press correspondent whether his present policy as revealed by his writings did not vitiate his own declaration that he was a friend of China, Gandhiji said: "My answer is an emphatic 'No'."

I remain the passionate friend of China and I have always claimed to be. I know what the loss of freedom means. Therefore, I could not but be in sympathy with China which is my next-door neighbour in distress. And, if I believed in violence and if I could influence India, I would put in motion every force at my command on behalf of China to save her liberty. In making, therefore, the suggestion which I have made about withdrawal of British power, I have not lost sight of China. But because I have China in mind, I feel that the only effective way for India to help China is to persuade Great Britain to free India and let a free India make her full contribution to the war effort. Instead of being sullen and discontented, India free will be a mighty force for the good of mankind in general. It is true that the solution I have presented is a heroic solution beyond the ken of Englishmen. But being a true friend of Britain and China and Russia, I must not suppress the solution which I believe to be eminently practical and probably the only one in order to save the situation and in order to convert the war into a power for good instead of being what it is, a peril to humanity.

I am not Pro-Japanese.

"Pandit Nehru told me yesterday that he heard people in Lahore and Delhi saying that I have turned pro-Japanese. I could only laugh at the suggestion, for, if I am sincere in my passion for freedom, I could not consciously or unconsciously take a step which will involve India in the position of merely changing masters. If, in spite of my resistance to the Japanese menace with my whole soul, the mishap occurs, of which I have never denied the possibility, then the blame would rest wholly on British shoulders. I have no shadow of doubt about it. I have made no suggestion, which, even from the military standpoint, is fraught with the slightest danger to British power or to Chinese. It is obvious that India is not allowed to pull her weight in favour of China. If British power is withdrawn from India in an orderly manner, Britain will be relieved of the burden of keeping the peace in India and at the same time gain in a free India an ally not in the cause of Empire—because she would have renounced *in toto* all her imperial designs, not pretended but wholly real, of human freedom. That I assert and that only is the burden of my recent writings and I shall continue to do so so long as I am allowed by the British power.'

No secrecy.

"Now what about your plan; you are reported to have matured plans for launching some big offensive?" was the next question. Gandhiji replies: "Well, I have never believed in secrecy nor do I do so now. There are certainly many plans floating in my brain. But just now I merely allow them to float in my brain. My first task is to educate the public mind in India and

world opinion, in so far as I am allowed to do so. And when I have finished that process to my satisfaction, I may have to do something. That something may be very big, if the Congress is with me and the people are with me. But British authority will have a full knowledge of anything I may wish to do before I enforce it. Remember I have yet to see the Maulana Sahib. My talks with Pandit Nehru are yet unfinished. I may say that they were wholly of a friendly nature and we have come nearer to each other even with the unfinished talk of yesterday. Naturally I want to carry the whole of the Congress with me if I can, as I want to carry the whole of India with me. For my conception of freedom is no narrow conception. It is co-extensive with the freedom of man in all his majesty. I shall, therefore, take no step without the fullest deliberation."

To resist Slave Drivers.

....."How are we to help in driving away the British from here?" was the first question that was asked.

"We don't want to drive away the British people from here. It is the British rulers whom we are asking quietly to withdraw. It is the British domination that we want to vanish from our land. We have no quarrel with the Englishmen, many of whom are my friends, but we want the rule to end altogether, for that is the poison that corrupts all it touches, that is the obstacle that stops all progress.

"And what is needed for this are two things—the knowledge that the domination is a greater evil than any other evil we can think of, and that we have to get rid of it no matter what it may cost The knowledge is so necessary because the British exercise their power and domination in all kinds of subtle and insidious ways that it is sometimes difficult to know that we are bound hand and foot. Next is the will to throw off the chains. We have simply to cultivate the will not to do the rulers' bidding. Is it very difficult? How can one be compelled to accept slavery? I simply refuse to do the master's bidding. He may torture me, break my bones to atoms, and even kill me. He will then have my dead body, not my obedience. Ultimately, therefore, it is I who am the victor and not he, for he has failed in getting me to do what he wanted done.

"That is what I am trying to impress both on those whom I want to retire and those who are bound in their chains. I am going to use all my powers to do so, but not violence—simply because I have no faith in it.....

* * * * *

"But I am going to be patient, I am not going to hurry or hustle you. I am busy preparing the atmosphere, and whatever I will do I shall do having in view the limitations of our people. I know that neither the rulers nor public opinion understand the implications of my proposal.".

"But", asked a friend, "have we not to see that the remedy may not be worse than the disease? There will be, in the course of resistance, in spite of all our will to prevent them, clashes and resultant anarchy. May not that anarchy be worse than the present anarchy which you have called ordered anarchy!?'

"That is a very proper question. That is the consideration that has weighed with me all these 22 years. I waited and waited until the country should develop the non-violent strength necessary to throw off the foreign yoke. But my attitude has now undergone a change. I feel that I cannot afford to wait. If I continue to wait I might have to wait till doomsday. For the preparation that I have prayed for and worked for may never come, and in the meantime I may be enveloped and overwhelmed by the flames that threaten all of us. That is why I have decided that even at certain risks which are obviously involved I must ask the people to resist the slavery. But, even that readiness, let me assure you, depends on the non-violent man's unflinching faith. All I am conscious of is that there is not a trace of violence in the remotest corner of my being, and my conscious pursuit of *ahimsa* for the last 50 years cannot possibly fail me at this crisis. The people have not my *ahimsa*, but mine should help them. There is ordered anarchy around and about us. I am sure that the

anarchy that may result because of the British withdrawal or their refusal to listen to us and our decision to defy their authority will in no way be worse than the present anarchy. After all, those who are unarmed cannot produce a frightful amount of violence or anarchy, and I have a faith that out of that anarchy may arise pure non-violence. But to be passive witness of the terrible violence that is going on in the name of resisting a possible foreign aggression, is a thing I cannot stand. It is a thing that would make me ashamed of my *ahimsa*. It is made of sterner stuff."

Harijan, June 7th, 1942. pp. 183, 184.

WHY NON-VIOLENT NON-CO-OPERATION?

(D) "Supposing England retires from India for strategic purposes, and apart from my proposal—as they had to do in Burma—what would happen? What would India do?"

"That is exactly what we have come to learn from you. We would certainly like to know that."

"Well, there in comes my non-violence. For we have no weapons mind you; we have assumed that the Commander-in-Chief of the United American and British armies has decided that India is no good as a base, and that they should withdraw to some other base and concentrate the allied forces there. We can't help it. We have then to depend on what strength we have. We have no army, no military resources, no military skill either, worth the name, and non-violence is the only thing we can fall back upon. Now in theory I can prove to you that our non-violent resistance can be wholly successful. We need not kill a single Japanese, we simply give them no quarter."....

"Supposing Britain decides to fight to the last man in India, would not your non-violent, non-co-operation help the Japanese?" Asked Mr. Chaplin reverting to the first question he had asked.

"If you mean non-co-operation with the British, you would be right. We have not come to that stage. I do not want to help the Japanese—not even for freeing India. India during the past fifty or more years of her struggle for freedom has learnt the lesson of patriotism and of not bowing to *any* foreign power. But when the British are offering violent battle—our non-violent activity would be neutralised. Those who believe in armed resistance and in helping the British military are and will be helping them. Mr. Amery says he is getting all the men and money they need, and he is right. For the Congress—a poor organisation representing the millions of the poor of India—has not been able to collect in years what they have collected in a day by way of what I would say "so-called" voluntary subscription. This Congress can only render non-violent assistance. But let me tell you, if you do not know it that the British do not want it, they don't set any store by it. But whether they do it or not, violent and non-violent resistance cannot go together. So India's non-violent can at best take the form of silence—not obstructing the British forces, certainly not helping the Japanese."

"But not helping the British?"

"Don't you see non-violence cannot give any other aid?"

"But the railways, I hope, you won't stop; the services, too, will be, I hope, allowed to function."

"They will be allowed to function, as they are being allowed today."

"Aren't you then helping the British by leaving the services and the railways alone?" asked Mr. Belldon.

"We are indeed. That is our non-embarrassment policy."

A bad job.

....."Don't you think Indian people and leaders have some duty to help accelerate the process (process of withdrawal)?"

"You mean by dotting India with rebellions everywhere? No, my invitation to the British to withdraw is not an idle one. It has to be made good by the

sacrifice of the inviters. Public opinion has got to act, and it can act only non-violently."

"Is the possibility of strikes precluded?" wondered Mr. Belldon.

"No", said Gandhiji, "strikes can be and have been non-violent. If railways are worked only to strengthen the British hold on India they need not be assisted. But before I decide to take any energetic measures I must endeavour to show the reasonableness of my demand. The moment it is complied with, India instead of being sullen becomes an ally. Remember I am more interested that the British in keeping the Japanese out. For Britain's defeat in Indian waters may mean *only the loss of India*, but if Japan wins India loses *everything*.

The Crucial Test.

"If you regard the American troops as an imposition, would you regard the American Technical Mission also in the same light?" was the next question.

"A tree is judged by its fruit", said Gandhiji succinctly. "I have met Dr. Grady, we have had cordial talks. I have no prejudice against Americans. I have hundreds, if not thousands of friends, in America. The Technical Mission may have nothing but goodwill for India. But my point is that all the things that are happening are not happening at the invitation or wish of India. Therefore they are all suspect. We cannot look upon them with philosophic calmness, for the simple reason that we cannot close our eyes, as I have said, to the things that are daily happening in front of our eyes. Areas are being vacated and turned into military camps, people being thrown on their own resources. Hundreds, if not thousands, on their way from Burma perished without food and drink, and the wretched discrimination stared even these miserable people in the face. One route for the whites, another for the blacks. Provision of food and shelter for the whites, none for the blacks! And discrimination even on their arrival in India! India is being ground down to dust and humiliated, even before the Japanese advent, not for India's defence—and no one knows for whose defence. And so one fine morning I came to the decision to make this honest demand: 'For Heaven's sake leave India alone. Let us breath the air of freedom. It may choke us, suffocate us, as it did the slaves on their emancipation. But I want the present sham to end'."

"But it is the British troops you have in mind, not the American?"

"It does not make for me the slightest difference, the whole policy is one and indivisible."

"Is there any hope of Britain listening?"

"I will not die without that hope. And if there is a long leave of life for me, I may even see it fulfilled. For there is nothing unpractical in the proposal, no insuperable difficulties about it. Let me add that if Britain is not willing to do so wholeheartedly Britain does not deserve to win."

Harijan, June 14th, 1942. pp. 185-86-87.

IMPLICATIONS OF WITHDRAWAL.

(E) The following are the questions put by a representative of *The News Chronicle* (London) to Gandhiji (Bombay, 14th May 1942) and the latter's replies to them:—

1. *Q.* You have recently asked the British to withdraw from India. Do you think it possible in the present circumstances for them to withdraw all at once? To whom are they to entrust the administration?

A. It has cost me much to come to the conclusion that the British should withdraw from India, and it is costing me still more to work out that conclusion. It is like asking loved ones to part, but it has become a paramount duty. And the beauty and the necessity for withdrawal lie in its being immediate. They and we both are in the midst of fire. If they go, there is a likelihood of both of us being safe. If they do not, Heaven only knows what will happen. I have said in the plainest terms that in my proposal there is no question of entrusting the administration to any person or party. That would be a necessary consideration,

if the withdrawal was part of a settlement. Under my proposal, they have to leave India in God's hands—but in modern parlance to anarchy, and that anarchy may lead to internecine warfare for a time or to unrestrained dacoities. From these a true India will rise in the place of the false one we see.

2. *Q.* How is your policy of non-embarrassment reconcilable with this advice?

A. My policy of non-embarrassment remains intact in terms in which I have described it. If the British withdraw, surely there is no embarrassment: not only so, they become eased of a tremendous burden, if they would calmly consider the meaning of the enslavement of a whole people. But if they persist, well knowing that they are surrounded by hatred, they invite embarrassment. I do not produce it by stating the truth, however, unpalatable it may appear for the moment.

3. *Q.* Already there are signs of civil insecurity; and would not life be even more insecure, were the present administration suddenly to withdraw?

A. Of course, there is civil insecurity and I have already confessed that insecurity is likely to increase very much only to give place to real security. The present insecurity is chronic and therefore not so much felt. But a disease that is not felt is worse than one that is felt.

4. *Q.* Were the Japanese to invade India, what would your advice be to the Indian people?

A. I have already said in my articles that it is just likely that the Japanese will not want to invade India, their prey having gone. But it is equally likely that they will want to invade India in order to use her ports for strategic purposes. Then, I would advise the people to do the same thing that I have advised them to do now, *viz.*, offer stubborn non-violent, non-co-operation; and I make bold to say that, if the British withdraw and the people here follow my advice, then non-co-operation will be infinitely more effective than it can be today, when it cannot be appreciated for the violent British action going on side by side.

Harijan. May 24th. 1942. p. 166.

ITS MEANING.

(F) *Q.* What is the meaning of your appeal to the British power to withdraw from India? You have written much recently on the subject. But there seems to be confusion in the public mind about your meaning.

A. So far as my own opinion is concerned, British authority should end completely irrespective of the wishes or demand of various parties. But I would recognise their own military necessity. They may need to remain in India for preventing Japanese occupation. That prevention is common cause, between them and us. It may be necessary for the sake also of China! Therefore I would tolerate their presence in India not in any sense as rulers but as allies of free India. This is course assumes that after the British declaration of withdrawal there will be a stable government established in India. Immediately the hindrance in the shape of a foreign power is altogether removed the union of parties should be an easy matter. The terms on which the Allied powers may operate will be purely for the Government of the free state to determine. The existing parties will have dissolved into the National Government. If they survive they will do so for party purposes and not for dealings with the external world.

ONLY IF THEY WITHDRAW.

(G) "Till the last day you said there can be no Swaraj without Hindu-Muslim unity. Now why is it that you say that there will be no unity until India has achieved independence", the Nagpur correspondent of *The Hindu* asked Gandhiji the other day.

Gandhiji replied, "Time is a merciless enemy, if it is also a merciful friend and healer. I claim to be amongst the oldest lovers of Hindu-Muslim unity and I remain one even today. I have been asking myself why every whole-hearted attempt made by all including myself to reach unity has failed, and

failed so completely that I have entirely fallen from grace and am described by some Muslim papers as the greatest enemy of Islam in India. It is a phenomenon I can only account for by the fact that the third power, even without deliberately wishing it, will not allow real unity to take place. Therefore I have come to the reluctant conclusion that the two communities will come together almost immediately after the British power comes to a final end in India. If independence is the immediate goal of the Congress and the League then, without needing to come to any terms, all will fight together to be free from bondage. When the bondage is done with, not merely the two organisations but all parties will find it to their interest to come together and make the fullest use of the liberty in order to evolve a national government suited to the genius of India. I do not care what it is called. Whatever it is, in order to be stable, it has to represent the masses in the fullest sense of the term. And, if it is to be broad-based upon the will of the people, it must be predominantly non-violent. Anyway, up to my last breath, I hope I shall be found working to that end, for I see no hope for humanity with the acceptance of non-violence. We are witnessing the bankruptcy of violence from day to day. There is no hope for humanity if the senseless fierce mutual slaughter is to continue".

Harijan, June 21st, 1942. pp. 197-98.

DELIBERATE DISTORTION.

(H) I regard my proposal as fool-proof. The operations of the Allied forces against Japanese aggression have been left intact under my proposal which amounts to this that Britain should become true to her declaration, withdraw from India as conqueror and therefore controller of her destiny, and leave India to shape her own destiny without the slightest interference. This, as I can see puts her case on a moral basis and gives her in India a great ally not in the cause of Imperialism but in the cause of human freedom. If there is anarchy in India, Britain alone will be responsible, *not* I. What I have said is that I would prefer anarchy to the present slavery and consequent impotence of India.

Harijan, June 28th, 1942. p. 203.

A POSER.

(K) There was obviously a gap (about Allied troops) in my first writing. I filled it in as soon as it was discovered by one of my numerous interviewers. Non-violence demands the strictest honesty cost what it may. The public have therefore to suffer my weakness if weakness it may be called. I could not be guilty of asking the Allies to take a step which would involve certain defeat. I could not guarantee fool-proof non-violent action to keep the Japanese at bay. Abrupt withdrawal of the Allied troops might result in Japan's occupation of India and China's sure fall. I had not the remotest idea of any such catastrophe resulting from my action. Therefore I feel that if in spite of the acceptance of my proposal, it is deemed necessary by the Allies to remain in India to prevent Japanese occupation, they should do so, subject to such conditions as may be prescribed by the national government that may be set up after the British withdrawal.

Harijan, June 28th, 1942. pp. 204-05.

A FALLACY.

(L) *Q*. You consider it a vital necessity in terms of non-violence to allow the Allied troops to remain in India. You also say that, as you cannot present a fool-proof non-violent method to prevent Japanese occupation of India, you cannot throw the Allies overboard. But don't you consider that the non-violent force created by your action which will be sufficient to force the English to withdrawal will be sufficiently strong to prevent Japanese occupation also? And is it not the duty of a non-violent resister to equally consider it a vital

necessity to see that his country, his home and his all are not destroyed by allowing two foreign mad bulls to fight a deadly war on his soil?

A. There is an obvious fallacy in the question. I cannot all of a sudden produce in the minds of Britishers, who have been for centuries trained to rely upon their muscle for their protection, a belief which has not made a very visible impression even on the Indian mind. Non-violent force must not act in the same way as violence. The refusal to allow the Allied troops to operate on the Indian soil can only add to the irritation already caused by my proposal. The first is inevitable, the second would be wanton.

Again if the withdrawal is to take place, it won't be due merely to the non-violent pressure. And in any case what may be enough to affect the old occupant would be wholly different from what would be required to keep off the invader. Thus we can disown the authority of the British rulers by refusing taxes and in a variety of ways. These would be inapplicable to withstand the Japanese onslaught. Therefore, whilst we may be ready to face the Japanese, we may not ask the Britishers to give up their position of vantage merely on the unwarranted supposition that we would succeed by mere non-violent effort in keeping off the Japanese.

Lastly, whilst we must guard ourselves in our own way, our non-violence must preclude us from imposing on the British a strain which must break them. That would be a denial of our whole history for the past twenty-two years.

Harijan, July 5th, 1942. p. 210.

OH! THE TROOPS.

(By M. K. Gandhi.)

(M) I have to pay a heavy price for having drawn up an entrancing picture of a Free India without a single British soldier. Friends are confounded now to discover that my proposal admits of the presence of British and even American troops under any circumstances at all.....

It has been pointed out that not to consent to the Allied troops remaining in India during the period of the war is to hand over India and China to Japan, and to ensure the defeat of the Allied powers. This could never have been contemplated by me. The only answer, therefore, to give was to suffer the presence of the troops but under circumstances the reverse of the existing.....

My proposal presupposes shedding of all fear and distrust. If we have confidence in ourselves, we need neither fear nor suspect the presence of Allied troops.....

It will be most assuredly an event of the century and may be a turning-point in the war if British can honestly perform the act of renouncing India with all that the renunciation would mean.....

As I have said already in the previous issue of *Harijan*, the British acceptance of my proposal may itself lead to a most honourable peace and hence automatic withdrawal of the troops.....

It (non-violence) will express itself in her ambassadors going to the Axis powers not to beg for peace but to show them the futility of war for achieving an honourable end. This can only be done if and when Britain sheds the gains of perhaps the most organised and successful violence the world has seen.

All this may not come to pass. I do not mind. It is worth fighting for, it is worth staking all, that the nation has.

Harijan, July 5th, 1942. p. 212.

FRIENDS' AMBULANCE UNIT IN INDIA.

(N) "We were wondering if it was auspicious for an English party to arrive in India, when you were asking the British to withdraw", said Prof. Alexander with a kindly smile. "Agatha suggested that we might have a party from India to work with us, and make of our party a mixed party."

"My first writing", said Gandhiji, "did, I am afraid, give rise to that kind of fear. That was because I had not given expression to the whole idea in my mind. It is not my nature to work out and produce a finished thing all at once. The moment a question was asked me, I made it clear that no physical withdrawal of every Englishman was meant, I meant the withdrawal of the British domination. And so every Englishman in India can convert himself into a friend—and remain here. The condition is that every Englishman has to dismount from the horse he is riding and cease to be monarch of all he surveys and identify himself with the humblest of us. The moment he does it, he will be recognised as a member of the family. His rôle as a member of the ruling caste must end for ever." And so when I said 'withdrawal', I meant 'withdraw as masters'. The demand for withdrawal had another implication. You have to withdraw, irrespective of the wishes of anybody here. You do not need the consent of a slave to give him freedom. The slave often hugs the chains of slavery. They become part of his flesh. You have to tear them asunder and throw them away. You must withdraw because it is your duty to do so, and not wait for the unanimous consent of all the sections or groups in India".

"There is thus no question of the moment being inauspicious for you. On the contrary, if you can assimilate my proposal, it is the most auspicious moment for you to arrive in India. You will meet many Englishmen here. They may have entirely misunderstood what I have said, and you have to explain to them what exactly I want them to do.

....."And it is well perhaps that your mission begins with me. Begin it with finding out what exactly is at the back of my mind by putting to me all the questions that may be agitating you."

That put both the friends at ease and prompted them to try to understand the whole of the background of Gandhiji's mind. And in this connection I may mention a curious but very significant fact. When Sir Stafford Cripps' mission was announced, Prof. Horace Alexander and Miss Agatha Harrison had sent Gandhiji a cable reminding him of the phrase Gandhiji himself had used, *viz.*, "Andrew's legacy" meaning thereby that in memory of Andrews the best Englishmen and the best Indians should come together to bring about a permanent understanding between England and India. "Here", their cable seemed to say in effect, "is one of the best Englishmen coming to India. You had better settle with him, as there is a great opportunity".

It was in reply to this cable that Gandhiji wrote a long letter to Prof. Horace Alexander soon after the failure of the Cripps' mission,—a letter in which he gave expression for the first time to the demand for British withdrawal. He had not discussed it with any soul on earth, but as he was writing the letter the thing that was, so to say, cooking in his mind ever since his return from Delhi came to his pen. "Sir Stafford", he said in that letter, "has come and gone". How nice it would have been if he had not come with that dismal mission..... How could the British Government at this critical hour have behaved as they did? Why should they have sent proposals without discussing them with the principal parties? Not one single party was satisfied. In trying to please all, the proposals pleased none.

"I talked to him frankly but as a friend, if for nothing else for Andrews' sake. I told him that I was speaking to him with Andrews' spirit as my witness. I made suggestions, but all to no avail. As usual, they were not practical. I had not wanted to go. I had nothing to say being 'anti-all-wars'. I went because he was anxious to see me. All this I mention in order to give you the background. I was not present throughout the negotiations with the Working Committee. I came away. You know the result. It was inevitable. The whole thing has left a bad taste in the mouth."

And now comes the key paragraph: "My firm opinion is that the British should leave India now in an orderly manner and not run the risk that they did in Singapore, Malay and Burma. That act would mean courage of a high order, confession of human limitations, and right-doing by India".

Gandhiji's talk was almost a commentary on the parts of the letter I have quoted. "You will see that I have used the words 'orderly withdrawal'. I had, when I used the phrase, Burma and Singapore in mind. It was a disorderly withdrawal from there. For they left Burma and Malay neither to God, nor to anarchy, but to the Japanese. Here I say: 'Don't repeat that story here. Don't leave India to Japan, but leave India to Indians in an orderly manner'," said he, concluding the talk. The whole talk even as the letter I have reproduced, was inspired by the spirit of C. F. A., and the idea of asking the British to withdraw was conceived in the friendliest spirit, as it was done with a remembrance of C. F. A. and all his noble work. As Gandhiji said, "So you have now to do what Andrews did—understand me, pitilessly cross-examine me, and then if you are convinced be my messenger", Prof. Alexander felt overwhelmed and said: "We dare not assume his mantle. We can but try".

Harijan, July 5th, 1942. p. 215.

IF *HARIJAN* IS SUPPRESSED.

(By M. K. Gandhi.)

(O) Anxious enquiries are being made as to what I would do if *Harijan* was suppressed. Rumours are afloat that orders are on their way. I would ask enquirers not to be agitated if *Harijan* is suppressed. The paper may be suppressed. The manager has been instructed to stop the paper immediately orders are served on him. It is no part of the movement to publish *Harijan* in defiance of orders. But *Harijan* may be suppressed, its message cannot be, so long as I live. Indeed, the spirit will survive the dissolution of the body and somehow speak through the millions. For, with due apologies to Veer Savarkar, and Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah, I claim to represent the joint spirit of millions of Hindus and Mussalmans, and other non-Hindus who call themselves children of Hindustan. I am living, and hope to have the strength to die, for the freedom of every inhabitant of this land.

Let us see what *Harijan* is today. It is being published in English, Hindi, Urdu (2 places), Tamil, Telegu (2 places), Oriya, Marathi, Gujarati, Kanarese (2 places). It is ready to be published in Bengali only awaiting legal permission. Applications have come from Assam, Kerala and Sindh. All but one edition have a large circulation compared to the other weeklies. I suggest that it is no small matter to suppress such a paper. The loss will be more Government's than people's. They will incur much ill-will by suppressing a popular paper.

Let it be known too that *Harijan* is a views-paper as distinguished from a newspaper. People buy and read it not for amusement but for instruction and regulating their daily conduct. They literally take their weekly lessons in non-violence. It cannot pay the authorities to deprive the people of their weekly food.

And *Harijan* is not an anti-British paper. It is pro-British from head to foot. It wishes well to the British people. It tells them in the friendliest manner where in its opinion they err.

The Anglo-Indian papers I know are Government favourites. They represent a dying Imperialism. Whether Britain wins or loses Imperialism has to die. It is certainly of no use now to the British people whatever it may have been in the past. In that sense therefore Anglo-Indian papers are really anti-British as *Harijan* is pro-British. The former are disseminating hatred day by day by hiding the reality and bolstering Imperialism which is ruining Britain. It is in order to arrest the progress of that ruin that frail as I am, I have put my whole soul into a movement which, if it is designed to free India from the Imperial yoke, is equally intended to contribute the mightiest war-effort in their behalf. If they suppress *Harijan* let them know what they will seek to suppress.

Let me add too that without needing any pressure from outside, I am using the greatest restraint in the choice of printing matter. Nothing is being consciously published that would give any clue to the "enemy" as to military objectives or dispositions. Care is being exercised to avoid all exaggeration or sensational matter. Adjectives and adverbs are well weighed before being used. And they know that I am ever ready to acknowledge errors and mend them.

Harijan, July 19th, 1942. p. 229.

THE WARDHA INTERVIEW.

A Mass Movement.

(P) "Is it possible", asked the A. P. (America) representative, "for you to tell us the things you might do after the All-India Congress Committee meets and adopts the W. C. Resolution?".

"Is not that question a little premature? Supposing the All-India Congress Committee vetoes the resolution, the whole thing wears a different aspect. But you may know that it will be a mass movement of a strictly non-violent character and then you can fill in the details. It will include all that a mass movement can include."

"Will you include closing of liquor shops and foreign cloth shops?"

"It will depend on the circumstances. I don't want rioting as a direct result. If in spite of all precautions rioting does take place, it cannot be helped."

If imprisoned?

"Will you court imprisonment?"

"I am not going to court imprisonment. The struggle does not involve courting imprisonment. It is too soft a thing. We had, no doubt, made it a business to court imprisonment up to now, but there will be no such thing this time. My intention is to make the thing as short and swift as possible."

Quick came another question: "Will you resort to fasting if sent to jail?

It is not my desire this time, as I have said, to court imprisonment. But if I am dragged into jail, it is difficult to say what I may do. But I can fast, as I have fasted before now, though I should try to avoid such an extreme step so far as possible."

Negotiations.

"After the recognition of Free India it starts to function at once?"

"Yes, from the very next moment. For, independence will not be on paper, but in action. But your next legitimate question would be—'How will free India function?' And because there was that knot, I said 'Leave India to God or anarchy'. But in practice what will happen in this—if withdrawal takes place in perfect goodwill, the change will be effected without the slightest disturbance. People would have to come to their own without disturbance. Wise people from among the responsible sections will come together and will evolve a Provisional Government. Then there will be no anarchy, no interruption, and a crowning glory."

Shape of things to come.

"Can you visualise the composition of the Provisional Government?"

"I do not need to do so. But I am clear that it won't be a party government. All parties—including the Congress—will automatically dissolve. They may function later and when they do they may function complementary to one another, each looking to the other in order to grow. Then as I have said, all unreality disappears like mist before the morning sun—we don't know how, though we witness the phenomenon every day." "But" asked two of the Indian correspondents rather impatiently, "looking to all their past record will the British have the sense to come to terms?"

"Why not? They are human beings and I have never discounted the possibility of human nature's upward growth, and no other nation had ever had to face a freedom movement based not principally but wholly on non-violence."

"May not your movement hamper the efforts of the Allies in China?"

"No, since the movement is intended to make common cause with the Allies. it should not hamper the Allied effort."

"But if there is no withdrawal, then disturbances are bound to happen?"

"You see ill-will is already there. It will grow apace. Immediately the movement is started, the ill-will may be changed into goodwill if the British people respond. But even if they don't respond when people make an effort to free themselves from a foreign yoke, ill-will needs no other opening. It takes a healthy turn instead of the bad turn that it has today."

Free India's contribution.

"You desire to have India's freedom in order to help the Allies," was Mr. Edgar Snow's question, and the last question. "Will Free India carry out total mobilisation and adopt the methods of total war?"

"That question is legitimate," said Gandhiji, "but it is beyond me, I can only say Free India will make common cause with the Allies. I cannot say that Free India will take part in militarism or choose to go to the non-violent way. But I can say without hesitation that if I can turn India to non-violence I will certainly do so. If I succeed in converting 40 crores of people to non-violence it will be a tremendous thing, a wonderful transformation."

"But you won't oppose a militarist effort by civil disobedience?" Mr. Snow pertinently asked.

"I have no such desire. I cannot oppose Free India's will with civil disobedience, it would be wrong."

American opinion may be antagonised.

....."Speaking as an American", said Mr. Steele, "I can say that the reaction of many Americans would be that a movement for freedom may be unwise at this moment for it would lead to complications in India which may be prejudicial to the efficient prosecution of the war."

"This belief is born of ignorance", replied Gandhiji. "What possible internal complication can take place if the British Government declare today that India is absolutely independent? It would be in my opinion the least risk the Allies could take on behalf of the war effort. I am open to conviction. If anybody could convince me that in the midst of war, the British Government cannot declare India free without jeopardising the war effort, I should like to hear the argument. I have not as yet heard any cogent one."

Open to conviction.

"If you were convinced, would you call off the campaign?"

"Of course. My complaint is that all these good critics talk *at* me, swear *at* me, but never condescend to talk *to* me."

....."If India were made of four hundred million Gandhis....." interrupted Mr. Steele.

"Here", said Gandhiji, "we come to brass tacks. That means India is not sufficiently non-violent. If we had been, there would have been no parties, and there would be no Japanese attacks. I know non-violence is limited in both numbers and quality, but, deficient as it is in both these respects, it has made a great impression and infused life into the people which was absent before. The awakening that showed itself on April 6th, 1919, was a matter of surprise to every Indian. I cannot today account for the response we then had from every nook and corner of the country where no public worker had ever been. We had not then gone among the masses, we did not know we could go and speak to them."

Provisional Government.

"Can you give me an idea who would take the lead in forming a Provisional Government—you, Congress or the Muslim League?"

"The Muslim League certainly can; the Congress can. If everything went right, it would be a combined leadership. No *one* party would take the lead."

"Would it be within the present constitutional structure?"

"The constitution will be dead" said Gandhiji. The Government of India Act of 1935 *is* dead. The I.C.S. would have to go and it might be anarchy but there *need* be no anarchy, if the British withdraw with goodwill. *Free India Government* would set up a constitution suited to Indian genius, evolved without dictation from outside."

....."The dictating factor will not be an outside one, but wisdom. And I believe there will be abundant wisdom among us,"

"Would the Viceroy cease to exist as such?"

"We shall be friends *even* then, but on a par, and I have no doubt that Lord Linlithgow will welcome the day when he will be one of the people."

Why not today?

"Why can't all this be done today, without the British withdrawal," said Mr. Emeny returning to the charge.

"The answer is simple. Why can't a prisoner do a thing which a free man can do? You may not have been behind prison bars, but I have been and I know. Imprisonment means civil death, and I suggest to you that the whole of India is civilly dead. The very breath is controlled by British power. Then there is another experience that you lack. You have not been a member of a nation that has been under subjection for several centuries. Our *habit* has been that we can never be free. You know the case of Shri Subhas Bose, a man of great self-sacrifice who might have had a distinguished career in the Indian Civil Service, but who is now an exile because he cannot possibly tolerate this helpless condition and feels that he must seek the help of Germany and Japan.

Harijan, July 26th, 1942. pp. 242-43.

TO AMERICAN FRIENDS.

(Q) .....I claim to be a votary of truth from my childhood. It was the most natural thing to me. My prayerful search gave me the revealing maxim "Truth is God" instead of the usual one "God is Truth". That maxim enables me to see God face to face as it were. I feel him pervade every fibre of my being. With this Truth as witness between you and me, I assert that I would not have asked my country to invite Great Britain to withdraw her rule over India, irrespective of any demand to the contrary, if I had not seen at once that for the sake of Great Britain and the Allied cause it was necessary for British boldly to perform the duty of freeing India from bondage. Without this essential act of tardy justice, Britain could not justify her position before the unmurmuring World Conscience, which is there nevertheless. Singapore, Malaya and Burma taught me that the disaster must not be repeated in India. I make bold to say that it cannot be averted unless Britain trusts the people of India to use their liberty in favour of the Allied cause. But that supreme act of justice Britain would have taken away all cause for the seething discontent of India. She will turn the growing ill-will into active goodwill. I submit that it is worth all the battleships and airships that your wonder-working engineers and financial resources can produce.

.....We, say, "This is the psychological moment for that recognition. For then and then only can there be irresistible opposition to Japanese aggression. It is of immense value to the Allied cause if it is also of equal value to India. The Congress has anticipated and provided for every possible difficulty in the way of recognition. I want you to look upon the immediate recognition of India's Independence as a war measure of first-class magnitude".

Harijan, August 9th, 1942. p. 264.

(R) The suppression, of which perhaps the hysterical outburst in America and Great Britain is a precursor, may cow down the people for the moment but it will never put out the light of revolt once it has been lighted.

JUSTICE OF CONGRESS DEMAND.

The justice of the demand for the ending of British power has never been questioned, the moment chosen for enforcing it is the target of attack. It is clear as crystal in the Working Committee resolution, why this moment is chosen. Let me paraphrase it. India is not playing any effective part in the war. Some of us feel ashamed that it is so and, what is more, we feel that if we were free from the foreign yoke, we should play a worthy, nay, a decisive part in the World War which has yet to reach its climax. We know, that if India does not become free now, the hidden discontent will burst forth into a welcome to the Japanese, should they effect a landing. We feel that such an event would be a calamity of the first magnitude. We can avoid it if India gains her freedom. To distrust this simple natural and honest declaration is to court disaster.

AZAD'S STATEMENT CITED.

But the critics say: "To whom are the British rulers to hand the keys on their withdrawal?" It is a good question. Here is what Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President has said: "The Congress always stands, firstly, for sympathy towards Democratic countries, secondly, never desires to embarrass Britain and war efforts, and thirdly, it stands for opposition to the Japanese aggression. The Congress does not desire to take power for itself but for all. If real power is handed over to the Congress, surely it will approach other parties and will persuade them to join." The Congress President added that he "had no objection to Britain handing over power to the Muslim League or any other party provided it was real independence. The party will have to approach other parties as no single party can function properly without the co-operation of other parties."

The only thing needful is to hand over complete control without reservation save that during the war period the Allied troops will operate to stem the Japanese or Axis attack. But they will have no power of interference with the affairs of India which will be as free as Great Britain herself.

NOTHING TO CAVIL AT.

Surely, there is nothing here to cavil at for any one. That party or a combination which takes over control of India will have to look to the remaining parties for its retention of power. There is no hope of the parties coming together so long as they have to look not to one another but to an outsider for support and sustenance. Not one of the Viceroy's numerous Indian councillors are dependent upon anybody but the Viceroy for the positions they hold. How can the great or small representative parties operate without mutual support?

In a Free India even the Congress could not function efficiently for a day without the support of the smallest party. For in a Free India, at least for some time to come, even the strongest party will have no military backing. There will be no military to back. There will only be a raw police in the first stage unless the existing police will service the national government on its terms. But the support, such as it may be, Free India will be able to render to the Allied cause, will be of a sterling character. Its possibilities will be limitless and there will be no motive left for welcoming Japanese arms.

On the contrary they will then look to the Allied arms to repel any Japanese or other attack, unless all Indians by then become non-violent. In any case, the Allied arms are there today and tomorrow and till the end of the war whether they are needed for India's protection or not.

If this representation of the implications of the Congress demand is not appreciated by the Allies' press or the Allies themselves Indian public men should be forgiven if they doubt the sincerity of the fierce opposition which is being organised with ominous unanimity. The latter can only stiffen India's suspicion and resistance.

Bombay Chronicle, August 3rd, 1942, being extract from article in *Harijan*, dated 2nd August 1942.

(S) "But to *whom* are the British to say—'India is free'?" asked the friends with a certain degree of exasperation.

"To the world", said Gandhiji without a moment's hesitation. "Automatically the Indian army is disbanded from that moment, and they decide to pack up as soon as they can. Or they may declare they would pack up only after the war is over, but that they would expect no help from India, impose no taxes, raise no recruits—beyond what help India chooses to give voluntarily. British rule will cease from that moment, no matter what happens to India afterwards. Today it is all a hypocrisy, unreality. I want that to end. The new order will come only when that falsity ends."

"It is an unwarranted claim Britain and America are making", said Gandhiji concluding the talk, "the claim of saving democracy and freedom. It is a wrong thing to make that claim, when there is this terrible tragedy of holding a whole nation in bondage."

Q. What can America do to have your demand implemented?

A. If my demand is admitted to be just beyond cavil, America can insist on the implementing of the Indian demand as a condition of her financing Britain and supplying her with her matchless skill in making war machines. He who pays the piper has the right to call the tune. Since America has become the predominant partner in the Allied cause she is partner also in Britain's guilt. The Allies have no right to call their cause to be morally superior to the Nazi cause so long as they hold in custody the fairest part and one of the most ancient nations of the earth.

Harijan, June 14th, 1942. p. 187.

FOREIGN SOLDIERS IN INDIA.

(T) Among the multitude of questions contained in my correspondence is the one referring to the advent of foreign soldiers in India. We have foreign prisoners enough. Now we have promise of a never-ending stream of soldiers from America and possibly China. I must confess that I do not look upon this event with equanimity. Cannot a limitless number of soldiers be trained out of India's millions? Would they not make as good fighting material as any in the world? Then why foreigners? We know what American aid means. It amounts in the end to American influence, if not American rule added to British. It is a tremendous price to pay for the possible success of Allied arms. I see no Indian freedom peeping through all this preparation for the so-called defence of India. It is preparation pure and simple for the defence of the British Empire, whatever may be asserted to the contrary. If the British left India to her fate, as they had to leave Singapore, non-violent India would not lose anything. Probably the Japanese would leave India alone. Perhaps India, if the main parties composed their differences as they probably would, would be able effectively to help China in the way of peace and in the long run may even play a decisive part in the promotion of world peace. But all these happy things may not happen, if the British will leave India only when they must. How much more creditable, how much braver it would be for Britain to offer battle in the West and leave the East to adjust her own position! There is no guarantee that she will be able to protect, during this war, all her vast possessions. They have become a dead weight round her. If she wisely loosens herself from this weight, and the Nazis, the Fascists or the Japanese instead of leaving India alone choose to subjugate her, they will find that they have to hold more than they can in their iron hoop. They will find it much more difficult than Britain has. Their very rigidity will strangle them. The British system had an elasticity which served so long as it had no powerful rivals. British elasticity is of no help today. I have said more than once in these columns that the Nazi power had risen as a nemesis to punish Britain for her sins of exploitation and enslavement of the Asiatic and African races.

Whatever the consequences, therefore, to India, her real safety and Britain's too lie in orderly and timely British withdrawal from India. All talk of treaties with the Princes and obligations towards minorities are a creation designed for the preservation of British rule and British interests. It must melt before the stern reality that faces all of us. Princes, in so far as they rely upon their armed strength, are more than able to defend themselves against unarmed India. The fiction of majority and minority will vanish like the mist before the morning sun of liberty. Truth to tell there will be neither majority nor minority in the absence of the paralysing British arms. The millions of India would then be an undefined but one mass of humanity. I have no doubt that at that time the natural leaders will have wisdom enough to evolve an honourable solution of their difficulties. This presupposes Japan and other powers leaving India alone. If they do not, I should hope even then for wisdom to guide the principal parties to devise a scheme whereby they can act with one mind to face the new menace.

Holding the views I do, it is clear why I look upon the introduction of foreign soldiers as a positive danger thoroughly to be deplored and distrusted. The present state of things and the attempt to uphold it are a distinct sign of corroding consumption of the body politic in India.

Harijan, April 26th, 1942. p. 128.

APPENDIX II.

NOT PRO-JAPANESE.

We can only infer that in the admittedly possible event of Japanese aggression on India after the departure of the British he (I) was prepared to concede to their (Japanese) demands.

Indictment p. 8.

IF THEY REALLY MEAN?

(A) *Q.* If the Japanese really mean what they say and are willing to help to free India from the British yoke, why should we not willingly accept their help?

A. It is folly to suppose that aggressors can ever be benefactors. The Japanese may free India from the British yoke, but only to put in their own instead. I have always maintained that we should not seek any other Power's help to free India from the British yoke. That would not be a non-violent approach. We should have to pay a heavy price, if we ever consented to take foreign aid as against the British. By our non-violent action we were within an ace of reaching our goal. I cling to my faith in non-violence. I have no enmity against Japanese, but I cannot contemplate with equanimity their designs upon India. Why do they not realise that we as free men have no quarrel with them? Let them leave India alone. And if they are well-intentioned, what has China done to deserve the devastation they have wrought there?

Harijan, April, 26th 1942. p. 136.

FRIENDLY ADVICE.

(B) ".....You say you are willing to take all risks. Every brave man is. At the same time is it not your duty to prepare the ground up to a point so as to minimise the risks as far as possible? The people must, for instance, be made to shed cowardice and feel that it *is* possible for us to stand on our own legs. They must not desire as so many do, Japanese help ....."

As these columns show, with the overwhelming sense of the truth as it appears to me, I am taking every care humanly possible to prepare the ground. I know that the novelty of the idea and that too at this juncture has caused a shock to many people. But I could not help myself. Even at the risk of

being called mad. I had to tell the truth if I was to be true to myself. I regard it as my solid contribution to the War and to India's deliverance from the peril that is threatening. It is too my real contribution to communal unity. No one can visualise what it will be like. Only it will not be the sham we have had up to now. It has touched only the few politically-minded people. The masses have remained unaffected by it.

Whilst therefore I will take every imaginable care consistent with the urgency, I cannot guarantee freedom from cowardice, before taking any forward step. The cowardice will probably not be shed without much travail. Nor is waiting possible, till hatred abates. Withdrawal of the hated power is the only way to rid the land of the debasing hatred. The cause gone, hatred, must cease.

Of course the people must not, on any account, lean on the Japanese to get rid of the British power. That were a remedy worse than the disease. But as I have already said, in this struggle every risk has to be run in order to cure ourselves of the biggest disease—a disease which has sapped our manhood and almost made us feel as if we must for ever be slaves. It is an insufferable thing. The cost of the cure. I know, will be heavy. No price is too heavy to pay for the deliverance.

Harijan, May 31st, 1942. p. 172.

IF THEY COME.

(C) *Q.* (1) If the Japs come, how are we to resist them non-violently?
(2) What are we to do if we fall into their hands?

A. (1) These questions come from Andhradesh where the people rightly or wrongly feel that the attack is imminent. My answer has already been given in these columns. Neither food nor shelter is to be given nor are any dealings to be established with them. They should be made to feel that they are not wanted. But of course things are not going to happen quite so smoothly as the question implies. It is a superstition to think that they will come as friendlies. No attacking party has ever done so. It spreads fire and brimstone among the populace. It forces things from people. If the people cannot resist fierce attack and are afraid of death, they should evacuate the infested place in order to deny compulsory service to the enemy.

(2) If unfortunately some people are captured or fall into the enemy's hands, they are likely to be shot if they do not obey orders, *e.g.*, render forced labour. If the captives face death cheerfully their task is done. They have saved their own and their country's honour. They could have done nothing more if they had offered violent resistance, save perhaps taking a few Japanese lives and inviting terrible reprisals.

The thing becomes complicated when you are captured alive and subjected to unthinkable tortures to compel subhission. You will neither submit to torture nor to the orders of the enemy. In the act of resistance you will probably die and escape humiliation. But it is said that death is prevented to let the victim go through the agony of tortures and to serve as an example to others. I however think that a person who would die rather than go through inhuman tortures would find honourable means of dying.

Harijan, June 14th, 1942. p. 189.

WHAT ABOUT RADIO MESSAGES?

(D) *Q.* You do not hear the radio messages. I do most assiduously. They interpret your writings as if your leanings were in favour of the Axis powers and you had now veered round to Subhas Babu's views about receiving outside help to overthrow the British rule. I would like you to clear your position in this matter. Misinterpretation of your known views has reached a dangerous point.

A. I am gold you have asked the question. I have no desire whatsoever to woo any power to help India in her endeavour to free herself from the foreign yoke. I have no desire to exchange the British for any other rule. Better the enemy I know than the one I do not. I have never attached the slightest importance or weight to the friendly professions of the Axis powers. If they come to India they will come not as deliverers but as sharers in the spoil. There can therefore be no question of my approval of Subhas Babu's policy. The old difference of opinion between us persists. This does not mean that I doubt his sacrifice or his patriotism. But my appreciation of his patriotism and sacrifice cannot blind me to the fact that he is misguided and that his way can never lead to India's deliverance. If I am impatient of the British yoke I am so because India's sullenness and suppressed delight of the man in the street over British reverses are dangerous symptoms which may lead to the success of Japanese designs upon India, if they are not dealt with in the proper manner; whereas India finding herself in possession of complete freedom will never want the Japanese to enter India. India's sullenness and discontent will be changed as if by magic into joyful and hearty co-operation with the Allies in consolidating and preserving her liberty from any and every evil design.

Harijan. June 21st, 1942. p. 197.

IF JAPANESE COME?

(E) The British United Press has cabled the following questions for Gandhiji's reply. They are couched in evidently angry language. But Gandhiji had no hesitation in sending straight replies to them.

Q. 1. Whether Gandhiji is willing to see British go while Japanese on the Frontier?

A. This question should not occur to anybody who has read my writings for they contemplate Allied arms operating in India during war.

Q. 2. Whether he would urge non-co-operation with Japanese after Japanese occupation?

A. Japanese occupation is inconceivable while Allied arms are operating on the Indian soil. If Japanese inflict defeat on Allied arms and succeed in occupying India I would most decidedly advise full non-co-operation.

Q. 3. Whether he would persist in urging (non-co-operation) if Japs shot non-co-operators?

Q. 4. Whether he would rather be shot than co-operate himself?

A. to 3 and 4. Non-co-operation worth the name must invite shooting. In any case I would rather be shot than submit to Japanese or any other power.

Harijan, July 26th, 1942. p. 248.

QUESTION BOX.

(F) *Q.* "Is it a fact that your present attitude towards England and Japan is influenced by the belief that you think the British and the Allies are going to be defeated in this War? It is necessary that you clear the position in this respect. A very important leader in the Congress thinks like that and he says that he is sure because he has this knowledge from his personal talks with you?"

A. I wish you could have given the name of the leader. Whoever he is, I have no hesitation in saying that it is not true. On the contrary I said only the other day in *Harijan* that the Britisher was hard to beat. He has not known what it is to be defeated. Of the Americans in this very issue you will see my answer to *The Sunday Despatch*. It contradicts the "leader's" statements. He has therefore either misunderstood me or you have misunderstood him. But I have said in my talk for the past twelve months and more that this war is not likely to end in a decisive victory for any party. There will be peace when the exhaustion-point is reached. This is mere speculation. Britain may

be favoured by nature. She has nothing to lose by waiting. And with America as her ally she has inexhaustible material resources and scientific skill. This advantage is not available to any of the Axis powers. Thus I have no decisive opinion about the result of the War. But what is decisive with me is that I am made by nature to side with weak parties. My policy of non-embarrassment is based upon that nature and it persists. My proposal for British withdrawal is as much in Britain's interest as India's. Your difficulty arises from your disinclination to believe that Britain can ever do justice voluntarily. My belief in the capacity of non-violence rejects the theory of permanent inelasticity of human nature.

Harijan, June 7th, 1942. p. 177.

UNFAIR TO AMERICA?

(G) Proceeding evidently on Reuter's summary of Gandhiji's statement about America during the interview he gave to the Bombay press, *The Sunday Despatch* of London sent Gandhiji the following cable:—

"You are reported as saying that America could have kept out of the war if she has wished. How can you justify such a statement in view of the fact that while at peace America was attacked by the Japanese who simultaneously declared war on her."

To this Gandhiji sent the following reply:—

"Cable just received. Evidently you have not my full statement. Part relating to America runs thus: 'I know that I have no right to criticise such a big nation. I don't know all the facts which has determined America to throw herself into the cauldron. But somehow or other opinion has forced itself on me that America could have remained out and even now she can do so if she divests herself of intoxication that her immense wealth has produced. And here I would like to repeat what I have said about the withdrawal of the British power from India. Both America and Britain lack the moral basis for engaging in this war unless they put their own houses in order by making it their fixed determination to withdraw their influence and power both from Africa and Asia and remove the colour bar. They have no right to talk of protecting democracy and protecting civilisation and human freedom until the canker of white superiority is destroyed in its entirety! I adhere to that statement. How America could have avoided war I cannot answer except by recommending non-violent method. My American friendships had led me to build high hope on American contribution to peace. America is too big financially, intellectually, and in scientific skill to be subdued by any nation or even combination. Hence my tears over her throwing herself in cauldron."

Harijan, June 7th, 1942. p. 181.

(H) MIRABEN'S LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW.

Detention Camp,
Aga Khan's Palace, Poona,
Christmas Eve, 1942.

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

My only excuse for writing you this letter is the deep pain I feel, as one born of English parents, over the falsehood regarding Gandhiji and the Indian National Congress which seem to have appeared in certain English papers without being officially contradicted.

Within the limits of the newspapers that reach me here, I have been watching the ever-growing volume of anti-Congress propaganda in the British Press. Of the various untruths that are being circulated, I want, in this letter, to deal with only one, namely, the assertion that Gandhiji and the Congress are pro-Japanese. For samples of such propaganda that has come to my notice, I would refer to *The Bombay Chronicle Weekly* of November, 29th, 1942, page 22, and to *The Hindu*, (Dâk Edition) of December 19th, 1942, page 4, column 3.

Amongst the quotations and facsimiles given in *The Bombay Chronicle*

Weekly is a photograph of the first page of *The London Daily Sketch* of August 5th, 1942, showing a full page headline "*Gandhi's India-Jap Peace Plan Exposed*", and lower down, on the same page, a photograph of myself with the sub-heading, "*English Woman Gandhi's Jap Peace Envoy.*" *The Punch* cartoons of which facsimiles are also given, are, if possible, even more disgraceful. In *The Hindu* there is a protest by Shri K. M. Munshi from which it would appear that this libellous propaganda has spread even to *The London Daily Herald*.

Now, the reason for my bringing this matter before you is that I have in my possession correspondence that passed between Gandhiji and myself while I was in Orissa, *after* the April meeting of the All-India Congress Committee at Allahabad, which proves beyond the shadow of a doubt, that Gandhiji is cent. per cent. anti-Japanese.

The correspondence of which I enclose copies, consists of a Confidential Report, with questionnaire regarding the then anticipated Japanese invasion, which I sent to Gandhiji by special messenger from Orissa, where he had deputed me for helping the Congress workers generally, especially as a Japanese attack on the East Coast was hourly expected.

The Report which I have with me is the original draft, written in my own hand. It is not dated or signed, as these things I affixed to the typewritten copy which was sent; but it must be just about 3 to 4 days previous to Gandhiji's reply, dated 31st May 1942, which he dictated to the late Shri Mahadev Desai, and forwarded to me at once by the returning special messenger. Of this I have the original in Shri Mahadev Desai's own handwriting, and signed "Bapu", by Gandhiji. The interview referred to in the first paragraph of the letter, was the one I had on 25th May 1942, with Mr. Wood, then Chief Secretary to the Government of Orissa, at which Mr. Mansfield was also present.

Seeing that no God-fearing Ruler could, with any peace of mind, allow the above-mentioned slanderous propaganda on the part of his own people, against those whom he had rendered unable to reply, to continue unchecked once he had had unchallengeable proof of its falsehood, I put trust in the belief that you will publish the enclosed correspondence together with this covering letter, and refute the assertions of these British journals.

I may add that since I am personally acquainted with the members of the Working Committee and have freely discussed these matters with them, I can say with confidence that their feelings have been unequivocally anti-Japanese and anti-Fascist throughout.

Believe me.
Yours sincerely,
MIRABEN.

MIRABEN'S QUESTIONS ON THE FEARED INVASION AND OCCUPATION BY THE JAPANESE

We may take it that the Japanese will land somewhere along the Orissa coast. Probably there will be no bombing or firing at the time of landing, as there are no defence measure on the coast. From the coast they will advance rapidly across the flat dry rice fields, where the only obstructions are rivers and ditches, now mostly dry and nowhere unfordable. As far as we are able to make out there will be no serious attempts to hold the Japanese advance until the hilly and wooded regions of the Orissa States are reached. The army of defences whatever it is, reported to be hidden in the jungles of those parts. It is likely to make a desperate attempt to defend the Jamshedpur road, but the chances, of its being successful must be very small. That means we may expect a battle to be fought in the north-west of Orissa, after which the Japanese army will pass on into Bihar. At that time the Japanese are not likely to be broadly distributed over the country, but concentrated on their

lines of communication between the sea and their advancing Army. The British administration will have previously disappeared from the scene.

The problem before us is, in the event of these things happening, how are we to act?

The Japanese armies will rush over the fields and through the villages, not as avowed enemies of the population, but as chasers and destroyers of the British and American war effort. The population in its turn is vague in its feeling. The strongest feeling is fear and distrust of the British, which is growing day by day, on account of the treatment they are receiving. Anything that is not British is therefore something welcome. Here is a funny example. The villagers in some parts say: "Oh, the aeroplanes that make a great noise are British, but there are silent planes also, and they are Mahatma planes." I think the only thing possible for these simple innocent people to learn is the attitude of neutrality for it is, in reality, the only position that can be made logical to them. The British not only leave them to their fate without even instructing them in self-protection from bombing, &c., but they issue such orders as will, if obeyed, kill them before the day of battle comes. How then can they be ready enthusiastically to obstruct the Japanese who are chasing this detested Raj especially when the Japanese are saying: "It is not you we have come to fight." But I have found the villagers ready to take up the position of neutrality. That is to say they would leave the Japanese to pass over their fields and villages and try as far as possible not to come in contact with them. They would hide their foodstuffs and money, and decline to serve the Japanese. But even that much resistance would be difficult to obtain in some parts, the dislike of the British Raj being so great, that anything anti-British will be welcomed with open arms. I feel we have got to try and gauge the maximum resistance which the average inhabitants may be expected to put up, and *maintain*, and make that our definite stand. A steady, long sustained stand, though not cent. per cent. resistance, will be more effective in the long run than a stiff stand which quickly breaks.

This maximum sustainable stand which we may expect from the average people is probably:—

1. To resist firmly, mostly non-violently the commandeering by the Japanese of any land, houses, or moveable property.

2. To render no forced labour to the Japanese.

3. Not to take up any sort of administrative service under the Japanese. (This may be hard to control in connection with some type of city people, Government opportunists, and Indian brought in from other parts.).

4. To buy nothing from the Japanese.

5. To refuse their currency and any efforts on their part at setting up a Raj.

(Lack of workers and lack of time make it very hard, we have to strive to stem the tide.)

Now as to certain difficulties and questions which arise:—

1. The Japanese may offer to pay for labour, food and materials in British currency notes. Should the people refuse to sell for good prices or work for a good wage? For long-sustained resistance over many months it may be difficult to prevent this. So long as they refuse to buy or take "service", the exploitation danger is kept off.

2. What should be done about the rebuilding of bridges, canals, &c., which the British will have blown up? We shall also need the bridges and canals. Should we therefore set our hands to their rebuilding, even if it means working side by side with the Japanese, or should we retire on the approach of Japanese bridge-builders?

3. If Indian soldiers, who were taken prisoners in Singapore and Burma, land with the Japanese invading army, what should be our attitude towards them? Should we treat them with the same aloofness as we are to show the Japanese, or should we not try to win them over to our way of thinking?

4. After the exodus (before the approaching Japanese) of the British Raj, what shall we do about currency?

5. After the battles have been fought and the Japanese armies will have advanced, the battlefields will be left strewn with dead and wounded. *I think we must unhesitatingly work side by side with the Japanese in burning and burying the dead and picking up and serving the wounded.* The Japanese are likely to attend to the lightly wounded of their own men and take prisoners the lightly wounded of their enemy, but the rest would probably be left, and it will be our sacred duty to attend to them. For this we are from now planning the training of volunteers under the guidance of local doctors. Their services can also be used in case of internal disturbances, epidemics, &c.

6. Besides dead and wounded on the battlefield, a certain amount of rifles, revolvers and other small arms are likely to be left lying about unpicked up by the Japanese. If we do not make a point of collecting these things they are likely to fall into the hands of robbers, thieves and other bad characters, who always come down like hawks to loot a battlefield. In an unarmed country like India this would lead to much trouble. In the event of our collecting such arms and ammunition, what should we do with them? My instinct is to take them out to sea and drop them in the ocean. Please tell us what you advise.

MY REPLY TO THE ABOVE

I have your very complete and illuminating letter. The report of the interview is perfect, your answers were straight, unequivocal and courageous. I have no criticism to make. I can only say "Go on as you are doing. I can quite clearly see that you have gone to the right place at the right time. I therefore need to nothing more than come straight to your questions which are all good and relevant.

Q. (1) I think we must tell the people what they should do. They will act according to their capacity. If we begin to judge their capacity and give directions accordingly our directions will be halting and even compromising which we should never do. You will therefore read my instructions in that light. Remember that our attitude is that of complete non-co-operation with the Japanese army, therefore, we may not help them in any way, nor may we profit by any dealings with them. Therefore we cannot sell anything to them. If people are not able to face the Japanese army, they will do as armed soldiers do, *i.e.*, retire when they are overwhelmed. And if they do so the question of having any dealings with the Japanese does not and should not arise. If however the people have not the courage to resist the Japanese unto death and not the courage and capacity to evacuate the portion invaded by the Japanese, they will do the best they can in the light of instructions. One thing they should never do—to yield willing submission to the Japanese. That will be a cowardly act, and unworthy of a freedom-loving people. They must not escape from one fire only to fall into another and probably more terrible. Their attitude therefore must always be of resistance to the Japanese. No question therefore arises of accepting British currency notes or Japanese coins. They will handle nothing from Japanese hands. So far as dealings with our own people are concerned they will either resort to barter or make use of such British currency that they have in the hope that the National Government that may take the place of British Government will take up from the people all the British currency in accordance with its capacity.

(2) Question about co-operation in bridge-building is covered by the above. There can be no question of this co-operation.

(3) If Indian soldiers come in contact with our people we must fraternise with them if they are well disposed, and invite them, if they can, to join the nation. Probably they have been brought under promise that they will deliver the country from foreign yoke. There will be no foreign yoke and they will be expected to befriend people and obey National Government that might have been set up in place of British Government. If the British have retired in an orderly manner leaving things in Indian hands the whole thing can work

splendidly and it might even be made difficult for Japanese to settle down in India or any part of it in peace, because they will have to deal with a population which will be sullen and resistant. It is difficult to say what can happen. It is enough if people are trained to cultivate the power of resistance, no matter which power is operating—the Japanese or the British.

(4) Covered by (1) above.

(5) The occasion may not come, but if it does, co-operation will be permissible and even necessary.

(6) Your answer about the arms found on the wayside is most tempting and perfectly logical. It may be followed but I would not rule out the idea of worthy people finding them and storing them in a safe place if they can. If it is impossible to store them and keep them from mischievous people yours is an ideal plan.

Sevagram, *via* Wardha, C.P.,
31*st May*, 1942.

"FIRE RAGING IN ME."

(K) A journalist was on a visit here the other day.....He was full of the happenings in his province.....

He talked of the public feeling in his province. "It is more anti-British than pro-Japanese", he said. "There is a vague notion that we have had enough of this rule, and almost anything would be better than the existing state of things. People are happy when Subhas Babu says on the radio that there are no differences between him and you and when he says you are now out to fight for liberty at any cost."

"But I suppose you know that there he is wrong", said Gandhiji, "and I cannot possibly appropriate the compliments he is paying me. 'Liberty at any cost' has a vastly different connotation for me from what it has for him. 'At any cost' does not exist in my dictionary. It does not for instance include bringing in foreigners to help us in our liberty. I have no doubt it means exchanging one form of slavery for another possibly much worse. But of course we have to fight for our liberty and make whatever sacrifice it demands. In spite of all the hypocrisy that you find in all the inspired press of Britain and America I do not relent. I deliberately use the word hypocrisy, for they are now proving that when they were talking of the freedom of India they did not mean it. So far as I am concerned I have no doubt about the righteousness of my step. It seems to me to be axiomatic that the Allies are in for a defeat this time if they will not do this initial act of justice, and thus put their own case on an unassailable basis. If they don't they must face the opposition of those who cannot tolerate their rule and are prepared to die in order to get rid of it. Convert the deepening ill-will into goodwill is a sound proposition. It is not open to them to say that we must smother our consciences and say or do nothing because there is war. That is why I have made up my mind that it would be a good thing if a million people were shot in a brave and non-violent rebellion against British rule. It may be that it may take us years before we can evolve order out of chaos. But we can then face the world, we cannot face the world today. Avowedly the different nations are fighting for their liberty. Germany, Japan, Russia, China are pouring their blood and money like water. What is *our* record? You talk of the newspapers doing good business out of the war. It is a shame to be thus bought and to refrain from speaking out at Government's dictation. There is many a way of earning an honest crust of bread. If British money—which is our money—can buy us Heaven help our country."

* * * * *

"I do not feel flattered when Subhas Babu says I am right. I am not right in the sense he means. For there he is attributing pro-Japanese feeling to me. If I were to discover that by some strange miscalculation I had not realised the fact that I was helping the entry of the Japanese in this country, I should not hesitate to retrace my steps. As regards the Japanese, I am

certain that we should lay down our lives in order to resist them as we would resist the British.

But it won't be the work of human hands. It will be the work of a Force—incalculable and invisible—which works often upsetting all our calculations. I rely implicitly on it. Otherwise I should go mad in face of all this torrent of what I must call irritating criticism. They do not know my agony. I cannot express it except perhaps by dying."

Was there the slightest suspicion that he wished victory to the Axis arms in order that the British may be humbled and their power in India may be destroyed? Gandhiji asked the friend to disabuse himself of any such notion. "Destruction of the British Power is not dependent on Japanese or German arms. If it depended on them, there would be nothing to be proud of, apart from the blight that would settle upon the world. What matters to me is that I cannot be happy or proud if someone comes in and drives away my enemy. Where do I come in there? I cannot possibly enthuse over such a thing. I want to have the pleasure of having offered up my sacrifice for fighting the enemy in my own house. If I have not that strength I cannot prevent the other from coming in. Only I must find a middle path to prevent the new enemy coming in. I am sure God will help me to find the way."

"I do not mind honest, strong, healthy criticism. All the manufactured criticism that I find being made today is sheer tomfoolery, meant to overawe me and demoralise the Congress ranks. It is a foul game. They do not know the fire that is raging in my breast. I have no false notions of prestige, no personal considerations would make me take a step that I know is sure to plunge the country into a conflagration."

Harijan, August 2nd, 1942, pp. 257-58.

(L) LETTER TO CHIANG KAI-SHEK.

DEAR GENERALISSIMO,

I can never forget the five hours' close contact I had with you and your noble wife in Calcutta. I had always felt drawn towards you in your fight for freedom, and that contact and our conversation brought China and her problems still nearer to me. Long ago, between 1905 and 1913, when I was in South Africa, I was in constant touch with the small Chinese colony in Johannesburg. I knew them first as clients and then as comrades in the Indian passive resistance struggle in South Africa. I came in touch with them in Mauritius also. I learnt then to admire their thrift, industry, resourcefulness and internal unity. Later in India I had a very fine Chinese friend living with me for a few years and we all learnt to like him.

I have thus felt greatly attracted towards your great country and, in common with my countrymen, our sympathy has gone out to you in your terrible struggle. Our mutual friend, Jawaharlal Nehru, whose love of China is only excelled, if at all, by his love of his own country, has kept us in intimate touch with the developments of the Chinese struggle.

Because of this feeling I have towards China and my earnest desire that our two great countries should come closer to one another and co-operate to their mutual advantage, I am anxious to explain to you that my appeal to the British Power to withdraw from India is not meant in any shape or form to weaken India's defence, against the Japanese or embarrass you in your struggle. India must not submit to any aggressor or invader and must resist him. I would not be guilty of purchasing the freedom of my country at the cost of your country's freedom. That problem does not arise before me as I am clear that India cannot gain her freedom in this way, and a Japanese domination of either India or China would be equally injurious to the other country and to world peace. That domination must, therefore, be prevented, and I should like India to play her natural and rightful part in this.

I feel India cannot do so while she is in bondage. India has been a helpless witness of the withdrawals from Malaya, Singapore and Burma. We must

learn the lesson from these tragic events and prevent by all means at our disposal a repetition of what befell these unfortunate countries. But unless we are free, we can do nothing to prevent it, and the same process might well occur again, crippling India and China disastrously. I do not want a repetition of this tragic tale of woe.

Our proffered help has repeatedly been rejected by the British Government, and the recent failure of the Cripps Mission has left a deep wound which is still running. Out of that anguish has come the cry for immediate withdrawal of British Power so that India can look after herself and help China to the best of her ability.

I have told you of my faith in non-violence and of my belief in the effectiveness of this method if the whole nation could turn to it. That faith in it is as firm as ever. But I realise that India today, as a whole has not that faith and belief, and the Government in free India would be formed from the various elements composing the nation.

Today the whole of India is impotent and feels frustrated. The Indian Army consists largely of people who have joined up because of economic pressure. They have no feeling of a cause to fight for, and in no sense are they a national army. Those of us who could fight for a cause, for India and China, with armed forces or with non-violence, cannot, under the foreign heel, function as they want to. And yet our people know for certain that India free can play even a decisive part not only on her own behalf, but also on behalf of China and world peace. Many, like me, feel that it is not proper or manly to remain in the helpless state and allow events to overwhelm us when a way to effective action can be open to us. They feel, therefore, that every possible effort should be made to ensure independence and that freedom of action which is so urgently needed. This is the origin of my appeal to the British Power to end immediately the unnatural connection between Britain and India.

Unless we make that effort, there is grave danger of public feeling in India going into wrong and harmful channels. There is very likelihood of subterranean sympathy for Japan growing simply in order to weaken and oust British authority in India. This feeling may take the place of robust confidence in our ability never to look to outsiders for help in winning our freedom. We have to learn self-reliance and develop the strength to work out our own salvation. This is only possible if we make a determined effort to free ourselves from bondage. That freedom has become a present necessity to enable us to take our due place among the free nations of the world.

To make it perfectly clear that we want to prevent in every way Japanese aggression, I would personally agree, and I am sure the Government of Free India would agree, that the Allied powers might, under treaty with us, keep their armed forces in India and use the country as a base for operations against the threatened Japanese attack.

I need hardly give you my assurance that, as the author of the new move in India, I shall take no hasty action. And whatever action I may recommend will be governed by the consideration that it should not injure China, or encourage Japanese aggression in India or China. I am trying to enlist world opinion in favour of a proposition which to me appears self-proved and which must lead to the strengthening of India's and China's defence. I am also educating public opinion in India and conferring with my colleagues. Needless to say, any movement against the British Government with which I may be connected will be essentially non-violent. I am straining every nerve to avoid a conflict with British authority. But if in the vindication of the freedom, which has become an immediate desideratum, this becomes inevitable, I shall not hesitate to run any risk, however great.

Very soon you shall have completed five years of war against Japanese aggression and invasion and all the sorrow and misery that these have brought to China. My heart goes out to the people of China in deep sympathy and in admiration for their heroic struggle and endless sacrifices in the cause of their

country's freedom and integrity against tremendous odds. I am convinced that this heroism and sacrifice cannot be in vain; they must bear fruit. To you, to Madame Chiang and to the great people of China, I send my earnest and sincere wishes of your success. I look forward to the day when a free India and a free China will co-operate together in friendship and brotherhood for their own good and for the good of Asia and the world.

In anticipation of your permission, I am taking the liberty of publishing this letter in *Harijan*.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI.

Hindustan Times, August 15th, 1942.

Further reference to the same subject will be found in—
Appendix I.
B. Out of touch,
C. I am not pro-Japanese,
D. Implications of the withdrawal,
K. A poser,
L. A fallacy,
P. American opinion may be antagonised
Q. To American friends,
R. Justice of Congress demand,
Azad's statement cited,
Nothing to cavil at.

APPENDIX III.

CONGRESS NOT FOR-POWER

"It has been suggested in the preceding paragraph that the Congress intended this Government to be under their domination and note has been made of the strength added to this view by the unity of Muslim opinion that the Congress move was aimed at establishing Congress-Hindu domination over India."

Indictment p. 12.

NOT RIGHT

(A) *Q*. Are we right in believing that you wish the Congress and the people to become capable as soon as possible of taking over the administration and to do so on the first opportunity?

A. You are not right. I cannot speak for the Congress. But I want no organisation or individual to become capable of taking over the administration. In non-violent technique, it is unthinkable. You do not take over power. It may descend to you being given by the people. In an anarchical state, all turbulent elements will make a bid for power. Those who will serve the people and will evolve order out of chaos will spend themselves in removing chaos. If they survive, the popular will may put them in as administrators. This is wholly different from what you have imagined. People who make a bid for power generally fail to achieve it.

Harijan, May 31st, 1942, p. 173.

WHAT ABOUT MUSLIMS?

(B) "But what does a Free India mean, if, as Mr. Jinnah said, Muslims will not accept Hindu rule?"

"I have not asked the British to hand over India to the Congress or to the Hindus. Let them entrust India to God, or in modern parlance to anarchy. Then all the parties will fight one another like dogs, or will, when real responsibility faces them, come to a reasonable agreement. I shall expect non-violence to arise out of that chaos."

Harijan, June 14th, 1942, p. 187.

TO MUSLIM CORRESPONDENTS.

(C) I think that even a large number, if not all of us, prepared to undergo any sacrifice that may fall to our lot, would impress the British rulers that they can no longer hold India as a British possession. I believe too that such a number is available. Needless to say, their action must be non-violent, irrespective of their belief, as even a military man's has often to be, on behalf of his cause. The fight has been conceived in the interest of the whole of India. The fighters will gain no more than the poorest Indian. They will fight not to seize power but to end the foreign domination, cost what it may.....

The Congress and the League being best organised parties in the country may come to terms and set up a provisional government acceptable to all. And this may be followed by a duly elected Constituent Assembly.

Harijan, July 12th, 1942, p. 220.

AN APPROPRIATE QUESTION

(D) How is Britain to know what sort of "resistance" the proposed Indian Government would organise, concludes *The Manchester Guardian*.

This is a good question. But who can speak for the proposed Indian Government? It must be clear that it won't be Congress Government, nor will it be Hindu Mahasabha Government, nor Muslim League Government. It will be all-India Government. It will be a Government not backed by any military power, unless the so-called military classes seize the opportunity and overawe the populace and declare themselves the Government as Franco has done. If they play the game then the proposed government would be a government though provisional in the first instance, broad-based upon the will of the people. Let us assume that the military-minded persons being without the backing of the powerful British arms will think wise not to seize power. The popular Government to be must represent Parsis, Jews, Indian Christians, Muslims and Hindus not as separate religious groups but as Indians. The vast majority won't be believers in non-violence. The Congress does not believe in non-violence as a creed. Very few go to the extreme length. I do as *The Manchester Guardian* properly puts it. The Maulana and Pandit Nehru "believe in offering armed resistance". And I may add so do many Congressmen. Therefore, whether in the country as a whole or in the Congress I shall be in a hopeless minority. But for me even if I find myself in a minority of one my course is clear. My non-violence is on its trial. I hope I shall come out unscathed through the ordeal. My faith in its efficacy is unflinching. If I could turn India, Great Britain, America, and the rest of the world including the Axis powers in the direction of non-violence I should do so. But that feat mere human effort cannot accomplish. That is in God's hands. For me "I can but do or die". Surely *The Manchester Guardian* does not fear the real article, genuine non-violence. Nobody does nor need.

Harijan, August 9th, 1942, p. 261-62.

UNSEEMLY IF TRUE.

(E) ..... Hindustan belongs to all those who are born and bred here and who have no other country to look to. Therefore, it belongs to Parsis, Beni-Israels, to Indian Christians, Muslims and other non-Hindus as much as to Hindus. Free India will be no Hindu Raj, it will be Indian Raj based not on the majority of any religious sect or community but on the representatives of the whole people without distinction of religion. I can conceive a mixed majority putting the Hindus in a minority They would be elected for their record of service and merits. Religion is a personal matter which should have no place in politics. It is in the unnatural condition of foreign domination that we have unnatural divisions according to religion. Foreign domination going, we shall laugh at our folly in having clung to false ideals and slogans.

The discourse referred to is surely vulgar. There is no question of "driving out" the English. They cannot be driven out except by violence superior to theirs. The idea of killing the Muslims if they do not remain in subjection may have been all right in bygone days; it has no meaning today. There is no force in the cry of driving out the English if the substitute is to be Hindu or any other domination. That will be no Swaraj. Self-government necessarily means government by the free and intelligent will of the people. I add the word "intelligent" because I hope that India will be predominantly non-violent.

Harijan, August 9th, 1942, p. 261.

Further reference to the same subject will be found in—
Appendix I.
F. Its meaning.
G. Only if they withdraw.
P. Negotiations.
Shape of Things to Come.
R. Azad's statement cited.
Nothing to cavil at.

APPENDIX IV.

ABOUT NON-VIOLENCE.

"Mr. Gandhi knew that any mass movement started in India would be a violent movement."

Indictment p. 39.

EXPEDIENCE.

(A) Yes, I adhere to my opinion that I did well to present to the Congress non-violence as an expedient. I could not have done otherwise, if I was to introduce it into politics. In South Africa too I introduced it as an expedient. It was successful there because resisters were a small number in a compact area and therefore easily controlled. Here we had numberless persons scattered over a huge country. The result was that they could not be easily controlled or trained. And yet it is a marvel the way they have responded. They might have responded much better and shown far better results. But I have no sense of disappointment in me over the results obtained. If I had started with men who accepted non-violence as a creed, I might have ended with myself. Imperfect as I am, I started with imperfect men and women and sailed on an uncharted ocean. Thank God that, though the boat has not reached its haven, it has proved fairly stormproof.

Harijan, April 12th, 1942, p. 116.

NON-VIOLENT NON-CO-OPERATION.

(B) *Q.* "There is a report about some new scheme that you want to propound in one of your *Harijan* articles about non-violent non-co-operation if any invader came to India. Could you give us an idea?" was the next question.

A. "It is wrong. I have no plan in mind. If I had, I should give it to you. But I think nothing more need be added when I have said that there should be unadulterated non-violent non-co-operation and if the whole of India responded and unanimously offered it, I should show that without shedding a single drop of blood Japanese arms—or any combination of arms—can be sterilised. That involves the determination of India not to give quarter on any point whatsoever and to be ready to risk loss of several million lives. But I would consider that cost very cheap and victory won at that cost glorious. That India may not be ready to pay that price may be true. I hope it is not true, but some such price must be paid by any country that wants to retain its independence. After all the sacrifice made by the Russians and the Chinese is enormous, and they are ready to risk all. The same could be said of the other countries also, whether aggressors or defenders. The cost is enormous. Therefore, in the non-violent technique I am asking India to risk no more than

other countries are risking and which India would have to risk even if she offered armed resistance."

"But", promptly came the question, "unadulterated non-violent non-co-operation has not been successful against Great Britain. How will it succeed against a new aggressor?"

"I combat the statement altogether. Nobody has yet told me that non-violent non-co-operation, unadulterated, has not succeeded. It has not been offered, it is true. Therefore, you can say that what has not been offered hitherto is not likely to be offered suddenly when India faces the Japanese arms. I can only hope that, in the face of danger, India would be readier to offer non-violent non-co-operation. Perhaps India is accustomed to British rule for so many years that the Indian mind or India's masses do not feel the pinch so much as the advent of a new power would be felt. But your question is well put. It is possible that India may not be able to offer non-violent non-co-operation. But a similar question may be put regarding armed resistance. Several attempts have been made and they have not succeeded. Therefore, it will not succeed against the Japanese. That leads us to the absurd conclusion that India will never be ready for gaining independence, and seeing that I cannot subscribe to any such proposition, I must try again and again till India is ready to respond to the call of non-violent non-co-operation. But if India does not respond to that call, then India must respond to the call of some leader or some organisation, wedded to violence. For instance, the Hindu Mahasabha is trying to rouse the Hindu mind for an armed conflict. It remains to be seen whether that attempt succeeds. I for one do not believe it will succeed."

Harijan, May 24th, 1942, p. 167.

SCORCHED EARTH POLICY.

(C) *Q.* "Would you advise non-violent non-co-operation against 'scorched earth policy? Would you resist the attempt to destroy sources of food and water?"

A. "Yes. A time may come when I would certainly advise it, for I think it is ruinous, suicidal, and unnecessary—whether India believes in non-violent non-co-operation or in violence. And the Russian and Chinese examples make no appeal to me. If some other country resorts to methods which I consider to be inhuman, I may not follow them. If the enemy comes and helps himself to crops I may be obliged to leave, because I cannot or care not to defend them. I must resign myself to it. And there is a good example for us. A passage was quoted to me from the Islamic literature. The Khaliphs issued definite instructions to the armies of Islam that they should not destroy the utility services, they should not harass the aged and women and children; and I do not know that the arms of Islam suffered any disaster because the armies obeyed these instructions."

Q. "But what about factories—especially factories for the manufacture of munitions?"

A. "Suppose there are factories for grinding wheat or pressing oil-seeds, I should not destroy them. But munitions factories, yes; for I would not tolerate munitions factories in a Free India if I had my way. Textile factories I would not destroy and I would resist all such destruction. However, it is a question of prudence." Gandhiji continued; "I have not suggested immediate enforcement of the whole programme in pursuance of the demand for British withdrawal. It is there of course. But I am trying, if I am allowed to continue to cultivate and educate public opinion, to show that behind this demand of mine there is no ill-will, no malice. It is the most logical thing that I have suggested. It is in the interests of all, and since it is an entirely friendly act, I am moving cautiously, watching myself at every step. I will do nothing in haste, but there is the fixed determination behind every act of mine that the British must withdraw."

"I have mentioned anarchy. I am convinced that we are living today in a state of ordered anarchy. It is a misnomer to call such rule as is established

in India a rule which promotes the welfare of India. Therefore, this ordered, disciplined anarchy should go, and if there is complete lawlessness in India, as a result, I would risk it, though I believe, and should like to believe, that 22 years of continuous effort at educating India along the lines of non-violence will not have gone in vain, and people will evolve real popular order out of chaos. Therefore, if I find that all the best effort fails, I would certainly invite people to resist destruction of their property."

Harijan, May 24th, 1942, p. 167.

WHAT WOULD FREE INDIA DO?

(D) Gandhiji had over and over again said that an orderly withdrawal would result in a sullen India becoming a friend and ally. These American friends now explored the implications of that possible friendship: "Would a Free India declare war against Japan?"

"Free India need not do so. It simply becomes the ally of the Allied Powers, simply out of gratefulness for the payment of a debt, however, overdue. Human nature thanks the debtor when he discharges the debt."

"How then would this alliance fit in with India's non-violence?"

"It is a good question. The whole of India is not non-violent. If the whole of India had been non-violent, there would have been no need for my appeal to Britain, nor would there be any fear of a Japanese invasion. But my non-violence is represented possibly by a hopeless minority, or perhaps by India's dumb millions who are temperamentally non-violent. But there too the question may be asked: 'What have they done?' They have done nothing, I agree; but they may act when the supreme test comes, and they may not. I have no non-violence of millions to present to Britain, and what we have has been discounted by the British as non-violence of the weak. And so all I have done is to make this appeal on the strength of bare inherent justice, so that it might find an echo in the British heart. It is made from a moral plane, and even as they do not hesitate to act desperately in the physical field and take grave risks, let them for once act desperately on the moral field and declare that India is independent today, irrespective of India's demand."

Harijan, June 14th, 1942, p. 187.

A CHALLENGE.

(E) The fact is that non-violence does not work in the same way as violence. It works in the opposite way. An armed man naturally relies upon his arms. A man who is intentionally unarmed relies upon the unseen force called God by poets, but called the unknown by scientists. But that which is unknown is not necessarily non-existent. God is the Force among all forces known and unknown. Non-violence without reliance upon that Force is poor stuff to be thrown to the dust.

I hope now my critic realises the error underlying his question and that he sees also that the doctrine that has guided my life is not one of inaction but of the highest action. His question should really have been put thus:

How is it that, in spite of your work in India for over 22 years, there are not sufficient *satyagrahis* who can cope with external and internal menaces? My answer then would be that 22 years are nothing in the training of a nation for the development of non-violent strength. That is not to say that a large number of persons will not show that strength on due occasion. That occasion seems to have come now. This war puts the civilian on his mettle no less than the military man, non-violent no less than the violent.

Harijan, June 28th, 1942, p. 201.

(F) Therefore the golden rule is to dare to do the right at any cost. But there should be no camouflage, no secrecy, no make-believe.

Harijan, July 12th, 1942, p. 217

GURU GOVIND SINGH.

(G) "..... But for me as a believer in non-violence out and out they (Guru Govind Singh, Lenin, Kamal Pasha, etc.) cannot be guides in life so far as their faith in war is concerned. I believe in Krishna perhaps more than the writer. But my Krishna is the Lord of the Universe, the creator, preserver and destroyer of us all. He may destroy because He creates. But I must not be drawn into a philosophical or religious argument with my friends. I have not the qualifications for teaching my philosophy of life. I have barely qualification for practising the philosophy I believe. I am but a poor struggling soul yearning to be wholly good—wholly truthful and wholly non-violent in thought word and deed, but ever failing to reach the ideal which I know to be true. I admit, and assure my revoluntionary friends, it is a painful climb, but the pain of it is a positive pleasure for me. Each step upward makes me feel stronger and fit for the next. But all that pain and the pleasure are for me. The revolutionaries are at liberty to reject the whole of my philosophy. To them I merely present my own experiences as a co-worker in the same cause even as I have successfully presented them to the Ali Brothers and many other friends. They can and do applaud wholeheartedly the action of Mustafa Kamal Pasha and possibly De Valera and Lenin. But they realise with me that India is not like Turkey or Ireland or Russia and that revolutionary activity is suicidal at this stage of the country's life at any rate, if not for all time, in a country so vast, so hopelessly divided and with the masses so deeply sunk in pauperism and so fearfully terror-struck."

Harijan, July 12th, 1942, p. 219.

THE CONFLAGRATION.

(H) *Q.* What is the difference between Nero and yourself? Nero was fiddling when Rome was burning. Will you be also fiddling in Sevagram after you have ignited the fire which you will not be able to quench?

A. The difference will be known if match, if I have ever to light it, does not prove a "damb squib". Instead of fiddling in Sevagram you may expect to find me perishing in the flames of my own starting if I cannot regulate or restrain them. But I have a grouse against you. Why should you shove all the blame on to me for all that may happen by reason of my taking action for the discharge of an overdue debt and that, too, just when the discharge has become the necessary condition of my life?

In their schools the rulers teach us to sing "Britons never shall be slaves". How can the refrain enthuse their slaves? The British are pouring blood like water and squandering gold like dust in order to preserve their liberty. Or, is it their right to enslave India and Africa? Why should Indians do less to free themselves from bondage? It is misuse of language to liken to the action of Nero that of a man who, in order to escape living death, lights his own funeral pyre to end the agony.

Harijan, July 12th, 1942, p. 228.

IN CASE OF ILLNESS.

(K) ..... But the relevant fact is that so long as the reason is unimpaired, physical illness is no bar to the conduct of a non-violent struggle. The peremptory belief in non-violent conduct is that all urge comes from God—the Unseen, even Unfelt save through unconquerable faith. Nevertheless as a seeker and experimenter I know that even physical illness, even fatigue is counted as a defect in a non-violent person. *Mens sana in corpore sano* is literally accepted by votaries of truth and non-violence. But that is said of perfect men. Alas I am far from the perfection I am aiming at.

Harijan, July 19th, 1942, p. 229.

FASTING IN NON-VIOLENT ACTION.

(L) If the struggle which we are seeking to avoid with all our might has to come, and if it is to remain non-violent as it must in order to succeed, fasting

is likely to play an important part in it. It has its place in the tussle with authority and with our own people in the event of wanton acts of violence and obstinate riots for instance.

There is a natural prejudice against it as part of a political struggle. It has a recognised place in religious practice. But it is considered a vulgar interpolation in politics by the ordinary politician though it has always been resorted to by prisoners in a haphazard way with more or less success. By fasting, however, they have always succeeded in drawing public attention and disturbing the peace of jail authorities.

My own fasts have always, as I hold, been strictly according to the law of *Satyagraha*. Fellow *Satyagrahis* too in South Africa fasted partially or wholly. My fasts have been varied. There was the Hindu-Muslim Unity Fast of 21 days in 1924, started under the late Maulana Mahomed Ali's roof in Delhi. The indeterminate fast against the MacDonald Award was taken in the Yeravda Prison in 1932. The 21 days' purificatory fast was begun in the Yeravda Prison and was finished at Lady Thackersey's as the Government would not take the burden of my being in the prison in that condition. Then followed another fast in the Yeravda Prison in 1933 against the Government refusal to let me carry on anti-untouchability work through *Harijan* (issued from prison) on the same basis as facilities had been allowed me four months before. They would not yield, but they discharged me when their medical advisers thought I could not live many days if the fast was not given up. Then followed the ill-fated Rajkot fast in 1939. A false step taken by me thoughtlessly during that fast thwarted the brilliant result that would otherwise certainly have been achieved. In spite of all these fasts, fasting has not been accepted as a recognised part of *Satyagraha*. It has only been tolerated by the politicians. I have however been driven to the conclusion that fasting unto death is an integral part of *Satyagraha* programme, and it is the greatest and most effective weapon in its armoury under given circumstances. Not every one is qualified for undertaking it without a proper course of training.

I may not burden this note with an examination of the circumstances under which fasting may be resorted to and the training required for it. Non-violence in its positive aspect as benevolence (I do not use the word love as it has fallen into disrepute) is the greatest force because of the limitless scope it affords for self-suffering without causing or intending any physical or material injury to the wrong-doer. The object always is to evoke the best in him. Self-suffering is an appeal to his better nature, as retaliation is to his baser. Fasting under proper circumstances is such an appeal *par excellence*. If the politician does not perceive its propriety in political matters, it is because it is a novel use of this very fine weapon.

To practise non-violence in mundane matters is to know its true value. It is to bring heaven upon earth. There is no such thing as the other world. All worlds are one. There is no "here" and no "there". As Jeans has demonstrated, the whole universe including the most distant stars, invisible even through the most powerful telescope in the world, is compressed in an atom. I hold it therefore to be wrong to limit the use of non-violence to cave dwellers and for acquiring merit for a favoured position in the other world. All virtue ceases to have use if it serves no purpose in every walk of life. I would therefore plead with the purely political-minded people to study non-violence and fasting as its extreme manifestation with sympathy and understanding.

Harijan, July 26th, 1942, p. 248.

WHAT ABOUT NON-VIOLENCE.

(M) *Q*. But what about your non-violence? To what extent will you carry out your policy after freedom is gained?

A. The question hardly arises. I am using the first personal pronoun for brevity, but I am trying to represent the spirit of India as I conceive it. It is and will be a mixture. What policy the National Government will adopt I cannot say. I may not even survive it much as I would love to. If I do, I would advise the adoption of non-violence to the utmost extent possible and that

will be India's great contribution to the peace of the world and the establishment of a new world order. I expect that with the existence of so many martial races in India, all of whom will have a voice in the government of the day, the national policy will incline towards militarism of a modified character. I shall certainly hope that all the effort for the last 22 years to show the efficacy of non-violence as a political force will not have gone in vain and a strong party representing true non-violence will exist in the country. In every case a free India in alliance with the Allied powers must be of great help to their cause, whereas India held in bondage as she is today must be a drag upon the war chariot and may prove a source of real danger at the most critical moment.

Harijan, June 21st, 1942. p. 197.

ANOTHER DISCOURSE.

(N) Bharatanandji, whose acquaintance the reader will make in another column, demurred to the compliment given to his countrymen, the Poles, by Gandhiji. "You say that the Poles were 'almost non-violent'. I do not think so. There was black hatred in the breast of Poland, and I do not think the compliment is deserved."

"You must not take what I say, so terribly literally. If ten soldiers resist a force of a thousand soldiers armed cap-à-pie, the former are almost non-violent, because there is no capacity for anything like proportionate violence in them. But the instance I have taken of the girl is more appropriate. A girl who attacks her assailant with her nails, if she has grown them, or with her teeth, if she has them, is almost non-violent, because there is no premeditated violence in her. Her violence is the violence of the mouse against the cat".

"Well then, Bapuji, I will give you an instance. A young Russian girl was attacked by a soldier. She used her nails and teeth against him and tore him, so to say, to pieces. Was she almost non-violent?"

"How can it cease to be non-violence, if offered on the spur of the moment, simply because it was successful? I interposed.

"No", said Gandhiji almost inadvertently.

"Then I am really puzzled", said Bharatanandji. "You say there should be no premeditated violence and no capacity to offer proportionate violence. Here in this case she by her success proved that she had the capacity".

"I am sorry", said Gandhiji, "that I inadvertently said no" to Mahadev. There was violence there. It was equally matched."

"But, then, is not intention ultimately the test? A surgeon uses his knife non-violently. Or a keeper of the peace uses force against miscreants in order to protect society. That too he does non-violently", said Bharatanandji.

"Who is to judge the intention? Not we. And for us the deed in most cases is the test. We normally look at the action and not at the intention. God alone knows the intention."

"Then God alone knows what is *himsa* and what is *ahimsa*."

"Yes, God alone is the final judge. It is likely that what we believe to be an act of *ahimsa* is an act of *himsa* in the eyes of God. But for us the path is chalked out. And then you must know that a true practice of *ahimsa* means also in one who practises it the keenest intelligence and wide-awake conscience. It is difficult for him to err. When I used those words for Poland, and when I suggested to a girl believing herself to be helpless that she might use her nails and teeth without being guilty of violence, you must understand the meaning at the back of my mind. There is the refusal to bend before overwhelming might in the full knowledge that it means certain death. The Poles knew that they would be crushed to atoms, and yet they resisted the German hordes. That was why I called it almost non-violence."

Harijan, September 8th, 1940. p. 274.

Further reference to the same subject will be found in—

Appendix I.

C. No. secrecy.
To resist slave drivers.
D. Why non-violent non-co-operation.
K. A. poser.
L. A. fallacy.
M. Oh! the troops.
P. Open to conviction.

APPENDIX V.

EXTRACTS FROM PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S ADDRESS TO THE JOURNALISTS' ASSOCIATION AT ALLAHABAD.

(A) We do not wish to take advantage of the peril to Britain, Russia or China, nor do we want the Axis power to win. We mean to stop the Japanese and to help China and the wider cause of democracy and freedom, but the nature of the peril is such now not only to us but through us to China also that we want to meet it by converting the war into a peoples' war as China has done. The preparation of the Government of India is entirely inadequate. We want to build up the national will to resistance.

PSYCHOLOGICAL REACTION.

We want to take up the present situation, even if we have to take risk in doing so. We want to save ourselves from immediate peril and not to take advantage of any situation, in order to gain independence. If we remain passive, we allow the popular will against the British Government to be broken gradually, and that will break the popular will to resistance. We want to gamble with fate if one chooses to call it so—and we will do it bravely.

Pandit Nehru said that it was not going to be a long-drawn-out affair, but it would be short and swift. How short and swift he did not know, because that depended on psychological factors. "Ours is not armed force. Our struggle depends upon the psychological reaction of a few million".

In reply to a question by an American journalist, Pandit Nehru said: "The movement can gain by what we do and can be accelerated by what the Government does". Gandhiji in his *Harijan* has indicated the steps, and the first step may be within a fortnight after the All-India Congress Committee meeting. That might be a preparatory step; unless the Government takes such action as might accelerate it.

The present decision, the Pandit said, was not taken in a huff, but they came to the conclusion, following a close analysis of the current world politics and the method of the British Government in fighting the war. He emphasised that when the Congress talked of Independence, it was thought that it was in the nature of bargaining. Therefore the demand for the withdrawal of British power from India had irritated the British. He explained that this demand was inherent in the nationalist movement. They were told that the "Quit India" demand was in the nature of blackmail, and India should wait till the situation was clear after the war.

Continuing, Pandit Nehru said that they waited these years and the Congress was on the point of starting *Satyagraha* in 1940, but at the fall of France they desisted from starting the movement, because they did not want to embarrass England during her moment of great peril. They wanted to face peril as far as possible. They wanted to prevent the Japanese aggression upon India and help China. He said that he could not have thrown in his weight with the British Government because the British policy was so deep-rooted that they could do nothing. There was no loophole to function effectively. The Congress wanted India not to be a passive onlooker.

In conclusion, Pandit Nehru said that the average man in India looked to the Congress for a lead, and if the Congress failed, the result would be so much spiritual disillusionment that it might break their spirit. So the alternative left to them was to take the risk to shake this spirit and change the whole of Europe and America into the conception of the war of Freedom.—United Press.

Bombay Chronicle, August 1st, 1942.

EXTRACTS FROM PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S SPEECH. TILAK DAY CELEBRATIONS, ALLAHABAD.

(B) My mind is quite clear that our decision is correct. I can say this with all the authority and dignity of a member of the Working Committee. My mind is at rest. I can clearly see the path before us. We can tread it fearlessly and bravely.

NO TRUCK WITH AXIS.

Pandit Nehru said that he wanted to make it clear that there was no intention to help Japan or to injure China. He said: "If we succeed that will release tremendous spiritual forces for the cause of freedom and Democracy and will greatly increase the resistance against Japan and Germany. If on the other hand we fail, Britain would be left to fight against Japan as best she can."

"CORRECT SLOGAN".

Gandhiji's "Quit India" slogan correctly represents our thoughts and sentiments. Passivity on our part at this moment and hour of peril would be suicidal. It will break down all our will to resistance. It would destroy and emasculate us. Our step is not merely for the love of independence. We want to take it to protect ourselves to strengthen our will to resistance to give a fresh orientation to the war, to fight and to help China and Russia: It is an immediate and pressing necessity with us.

PEOPLE'S WAR.

Answering the question "How would you fight against Japan?" Pandit Nehru said: "We would fight in every way possible with non-violence and with arms. By making it a people's war. By raising People's Army. By increasing production and industrialisation. By making it our primary consuming passion. By fighting like Russia and China and no price would be too big to pay to achieve our success against the aggressor".

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"Struggle—eternal struggle! That is my reply to Mr. Amery and Sir Stafford Cripps", said Pandit Nehru spiritedly criticising the latest statements of Mr. Amery and Sir Stafford Cripps.

"India's national self-respect cannot be a matter of bargaining" he added, "I am galled with sorrow and anger to note that I for years wanted some settlement because I felt that Britain was in trouble. They have had their suffering and sorrow. I wanted my country to move forward step in step with them as a free country. But what is one to make of such statements."

Bombay Chronicle, August 3rd, 1942.

PANDIT NEHRU'S STATEMENT ON THE SEIZED DOCUMENTS.

(C) Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has issued the following statement: "I have just seen for the first time the Government's communiqué issuing certain documents obtained during the police raid from the All-India Congress Committee Office. It is astonishing to what a pass the Government of India has been reduced when it has to adopt these discreditable and dishonourable tactics. Normally such tactics require no answer. But as there is likely to be misapprehension, I wish to clear up some matters."

"It is not our custom to keep detailed minutes of the Working Committee's meetings. Only final decisions are recorded. On this occasion the Assistant Secretary took brief notes unofficially apparently for his own record. These notes are very brief and disjointed and represent several days' prolonged debate during which I must have spoken on various occasions for two or three hours. Only a few sentences were taken down and torn from their context. They often give a wrong impression. None of us had a chance of seeing these notes or of revising them. The record is very unsatisfactory and incomplete and hence often incorrect.

"In our discussions Mahatma Gandhi was not present. We had to consider every aspect of the question fully and to weigh the implications of words and phrases in the draft resolutions. If Gandhiji had been there, much of this discussion might have been avoided as he could have explained to us his attitude more fully."

IMPORTANT OMISSION.

"Thus when the question of British withdrawal from India was considered, I pointed out that if the armed forces were suddenly withdrawn, the Japanese might well advance and invade the country without hindrance. This obvious difficulty was removed when Gandhiji later explained that British and other armed forces might remain to prevent aggression.

"In regard to the statement that Gandhiji expected an Axis victory, an important qualification has been omitted. What he has repeatedly said and what I have referred to is his belief that unless Britain changes her whole policy in regard to India and her colonial possessions, she is heading for disaster. He has further stated that if a suitable change in this policy was made and the war really became one for freedom for all peoples, then victory would assuredly come to the United Nations."

MAHATMA'S WAY.

"The references to negotiations with Japan are also incorrect and entirely torn from their context. Gandhiji always sends notice to his adversary before coming into conflict. He would thus have called upon Japan not only to keep away from India, but to withdraw from China, &c. In any event he was determined to resist every aggressor in India and he advised our people to do so even to the point of death. They were never to submit.

"It is absurd to say that any of us envisaged any arrangements with Japan giving her right of passage, &c. What I said was that Japan would want this, but we could never agree. Our whole policy has all along been based on uttermost resistance to aggression."—A.P.

Bombay Chronicle, August 5th, 1942.

EXTRACTS FROM PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRUS' SPEECH AT THE ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE MEETING, AUGUST 7TH, 1942.

(D) If the British Government were to accept the proposal it would lead to an improvement of the position both internal and international from every point of view. The position of China would be improved. He was convinced that whatever change might come about in India would be for the better. The All-India Congress Committee knew that Mahatma Gandhi had agreed to retain and allow the British and armed forces stationed in India. This he agreed to so as not facilitate Japanese action on the Indian frontier. Those who wanted to bring about a change should agree to this.

* * * * *

Referring to criticisms from America that Congress was blackmailing, Pandit Nehru said that it was curious and amazing charge. It was curious that people who talked in terms of their own freedom should level this charge against those who were fighting for their freedom. It was a curious charge to be made against a people who had been suffering for the last 200 years. If

that was blackmail, then "our understanding of the British language has been wrong".

Concluding he said he could not take any more risks and that they should go forward although such step might involve perils and risks.

The attitude of the Government was one of defeatism. He could not tolerate it. His only object was to remove the defeatists and put in their place valiant fighters.

Bombay Chronicle, August 8th, 1942.

APPENDIX VI.

EXTRACTS FROM MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD'S SPEECH AT THE ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE MEETING, AUGUST 7TH, 1942.

The extraordinary danger which India was facing was such that they could not face it, unless they had in their hands the reins of power. Danger was knocking at India's doors and it was necessary that they should make all preparations to check the enemy as soon as he jumped into our courtyard. That could be done only when they used every power in their possession. At Allahabad it had been decided that if Japan stepped into the land they would resist aggression with all their non-violent strength; but during the last three months, the world had not stood still. It had moved fast. The sound of war drums was coming nearer, while the world was flowing in blood and nations were fighting and pouring out their life-blood to preserve their precious possession of freedom.

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The Congress had made repeated proposals to Britain to give the people of India that freedom which would enable them to fight the aggressor. They had not asked for the keys of power so that they could sit back and make merry. That was not the way of the world today. The whole world was straining at its leash, was rushing towards freedom. In those circumstances, if they felt that conditions in India required a change, if they felt that their only salvation lay in making and bringing about drastic changes, then they should take such steps as would bring about those changes. At the same time they had to consider the possible consequences of their step on the entire world. They had to weigh the consequences of their action and inaction carefully in the balance.

WHEN INDIANS WILL FIGHT.

Therefore, the Working Committee had passed a resolution three weeks ago after fully considering their responsibilities, their duties, the consequences of their action and how best they could achieve their object. Their view was that unless some change was brought about at once, the same fate which overtook Burma, Malaya and Singapore would overtake this country also. If they wanted to fight for the safety, freedom and honour of India, it was necessary that they should cast off this shackles that were holding them down, to shake off that lethargy and go to work in an entirely new spirit. It was only when they felt that they were fighting for something which they held sacred that the people of this country could fight, pour out their energy and blood and lay down their lives. They had made repeated appeals and entreaties to bring about this change and as they had failed, it had become their duty to take a positive step. That step was certainly fraught with hardships; but could do nothing unless were prepared to suffer hardships and make sacrifices. It was only by suffering and strife that they could achieve anything at all. That was the meaning of the resolution of July 14th. During these three weeks, the message had spread throughout the land. The resolution only reiterated the position which they had always taken. As long as three years ago, the Congress had made its position clear and had cast its lot in favour of

democracy and against Fascism. Nothing that they had done since then was inconsistent with this fundamental position. They had always said that they would whole-heartedly aid the cause of Freedom and Democracy, if they were free. For freedom itself they could wait. But the present question was merely of freedom but of their very existence. If they survived and lived, they could have freedom. But the position now was that could not live and survive without freedom.

TWICE TESTED.

Continuing the Congress President said that the demand they were putting forward before Britain and the United Nations was to be judged by the one and only test and that test was whether for the sake of the defence of India, for her very survival, freedom was necessary. India had become a vital field of battle. If India were free, she could have kindled a new light throughout the land and the cry of victory would ring from every corner. No army could wage a relentless war unless it had behind it an administration which had the fullest popular support. If anybody could show them that what they were doing would contribute to the defeat of Freedom Powers, they would be prepared to change their course. But if the argument was merely a threat, holding out the prospect of civil war and chaos, he for one would tell them: "It is our right to wage a civil war; it is our responsibility to face chaos."

Proceeding the Congress President observed that having thus once tested the gold of their demand, they took the bright gold and applied to it yet another test and that test was: "Are we contributing to others' defeat to others' misfortune?"

If their demand was such that it would not contribute to the strength of the Freedom Powers, would not promote the cause of those powers fighting which valour for their freedom, they would never have put it forward. They had considered this question for full nine days. And, the Congress President said: "Our demand is twice-tested pure gold." "Is the British Government prepared to allow its actions and policies to be subjected to these same tests?" he challenged.

Answering critics of the Congress, he said that there was no right thinking man who would not accept the tests he had propounded as valid. It was the duty of the critics to understand their position correctly and not merely to give it a bad name.

In this connection he referred to the statement of Sir Stafford Cripps that if the Congress demand was accepted the whole Government from the Viceroy to the sepoy would have to leave. This was misrepresentation with a vengeance. Their resolution had said in clear terms that as soon as Britain or the Allied Nations declared India's Independence, India would enter into a treaty with Britain for the carrying out of the administration and the conduct of the war to victory. They had not asked that all the Government officials should go home, bag and baggage, and after reaching England, return to India for negotiations! Gandhiji had repeatedly made it clear that "Quit India" demand meant only the removal of the British power and not the physical removal of British officers, administrators and army personnel. All of them, including the armies of Britain and the Allies would continue to stay here—only under an agreement with us and not against our will as at present. Not to see this clear point was suicidal blindness.

SIMULTANEOUS DECISION ON BOTH ISSUES.

The Maulana stated: "There was a time for mere promises. But the resolution of July 14th makes one thing clear, namely, the condition of India and of the world has reached a stage when it was absolutely necessary that everything should be done at once. What we ask for from Britain and the Allied Powers should be done here and now. We do not rely on mere promises about the future. We have had bitter experiences of promises having been

broken. They also suspect our promise to fight with them against the Allies. Let us come together today and simultaneously decide both the issues—the freedom of India and India's complete participation in the war efforts. Let there be simultaneous declaration of India's independence and the signing of a treaty between India and the United Nations. If you do not trust us in this, we cannot trust you, either."

Concluding Maulana Azad observed that even in this grave hour when every minute counted, we had decided to make one last minute appeal to the United Nations, to demonstrate to them that the object of India and the Allied Powers was the same, that their interests were the same that the satisfaction of India's demand would promote the welfare of the Allies. But if the Allies were obdurate and deaf to all appeals, it was their clear duty to do what they could to achieve freedom.

Bombay Chronicle, August 8th, 1942.

APPENDIX VII.

EXTRACT FROM SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL'S PUBLIC SPEECHES.

(A) The war was coming nearer India and the fall of Malaya, Singapore and Burma which were lost led India to consider all possible steps to prevent a similar fate.

Gandhiji and the Congress thought that such a situation could be avoided, if only the British left the country. Public sympathy and co-operation was necessary to keep the enemy away. If the British left the country, the people could be galvanised and could be made to fight in the same manner as the Russians and the Chinese.

It was also Gandhiji's belief that as long as an Imperialist power remained it could also act as a temptation to another Imperialist power to covet this land and in this vortex of Imperialist ambitions, war would extend and continue. The only way to stop this was to end the Imperialist régime.

* * * * *

The Congress did not desire anarchy or the defeat of the British power. But they found themselves helpless. The curtain had to be rung down before further harm could be done. If the independence of the country was secured, then the Congress would have achieved its goal. It was prepared to give a pledge now that the Congress organisation would be disbanded, if that purpose was fulfilled.

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Speech at Chowpatty, Bombay, August 2nd, 1942.
Bombay Chronicle, August 3rd, 1942.

(B) Let Britain only transfer power to Indian hands whether it is to the Muslim League or any other party and the Congress is prepared to dissolve itself, declared Sardar Patel, addressing a public meeting here (Surat). The Sardar added that the Congress was started with Independence of India as its main and only goal and once that was achieved, the body would willingly cease to function.—A.P.

Bombay Chronicle, August 3rd, 1942.

EXTRACTS FROM SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL'S SPEECH AT THE ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE MEETING, AUGUST 7TH, 1942.

No Secret Plans.

(C) Referring to the charge levelled against the Congress Working Committee that it had secret plans, the speaker said that there was nothing secret about the Congress plans. There were no differences of opinion among the members of the Working Committee regarding the means of achieving India's independence.

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Japan professed love for India and promised her freeedom. But India was not going to be fooled by the Axis broadcasts. If Japan genuinely wished to secure freedom for India, why did the Japanese Government still continue the war against China? It would be Japan's duty to set China free before talking of India's freedom.

Follow Mahatma's Lead

Referring to the struggle ahead, Sardar Vallabhbhai said that it would be strictly non-violent. Many people were anxious to know the details of the programme. Gandhiji was going to place the details before the nation when the time came. The nation would be called upon to follow him. In case of arrest of the leaders, it would be the duty of every Indian to be his own guide. It was necessary to bear in mind that no nation had won independence without sacrifices.

Bombay Chronicle, August 8th, 1942.

APPENDIX VIII

EXTRACTS FROM DR. RAJENDRA PRASAD'S SPEECH AT THE BIHAR PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE MEETING, JULY 31ST, 1942

Explaining the implications of the present Wardha resolution Dr. Rajendra Prasad emphasised that it was not going to be mere jail-going this time. It was going to be more drastic, calling for the worst repression—shooting, bombing, confiscation of property, all were possible. Congressmen, therefore, had to join the movement fully conscious that they might be exposed to all these. The new plan of action included all forms of *Satyagraha* based on pure non-violence and this was going to be the last struggle for the independence of India. They could face all the armed might of the world with non-violence, the greatest weapon in the armoury of *Satyagraha*, he declared.

* * * * *

But the Congress had now come to the conclusion that there could be no unity until British power disappeared. The foreign element in the body politic of the country created such new problems that they proved difficult of solution. Mahatma Gandhi, therefore was now of the definite opinion that there could be no unity in India without Swaraj though formerly he held the opposite view. This opinion was the result of bitter experience and the outcome of the Cripps' mission.

* * * * *

Concluding Dr. Rajendra Prasad affirmed that the Congress had no quarrel with any one. The Congress only hoped to convert its opposition by its suffering and sacrifice. He was confident that the opposition would also join them in the great cause of India's freedom.

Bombay Chronicle, Weekly, August 2nd, 1942.

APPENDIX IX

[THIS CONSISTED OF MR. GANDHI'S LETTER TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY, DATED AUGUST 14TH, 1942—SEE ITEM 1 IN SECTION I OF THIS BOOK]

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(32)

To

The Additional Secretary, Home Department.

September 10th, 1943.

SIR,

On 15th July last I handed to the Superintendent of this camp for despatch to you my reply to the Government of India publication entitled "Congress

Responsibility for the Disturbances 1942-43". As yet I have no acknowledgment of the receipt of my reply, let alone answer to what I hold to be complete refutation of the charges set forth against me in that publication.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI.

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(33)

HOME DEPARTMENT,
September 20th, 1943.

SIR,

In reply to your letter of September 10th, 1943, I am directed to inform you that your letter of the 15th July 1943 has been received and is still under consideration.

I am, etc.,

R. TOTTENHAM,

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(34)

HOME DEPARTMENT,
October 14th, 1943.

SIR,

I am directed to reply to your letter of the 15th July in which you have attempted to controvert certain passages appearing in the Government publication "Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances 1942-43". At the outset I am to remind you that the document in question was published for the information of the public and not for the purpose of convincing you or eliciting your defence. It was supplied to you only at your own request and in forwarding it Government neither invited nor desired your comments upon it. Since, however, you have thought fit to address Government on the subject, I am to say that Government have given due consideration to your letter.

2. Government regret to observe that, although your letter contains lengthy quotations from your own utterances and writings, it contains no fresh or categorical statement of your own attitude in regard to the material issues or any clear repudiation of the disastrous policy to which you and the Congress party committed yourselves in the series of events leading up to the Congress resolution of the 8th August 1942. The purpose of your letter appears to be to suggest that you have been misrepresented in some way in "Congress Responsibility", but in what substantial respect is not clear. No attempt was made in the book, as you seem to think, to charge you with pro-Japanese sympathies and the sentence at the end of the first chapter, to which you have taken exception in paragraph 18 of your letter, was merely an echo of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's own words quoted on the previous page. He has not, as you wrongly allege, repudiated those words in the published statement to which you refer. It was, however, one of the purposes of the book to find an explanation of your actions in your own defeatist outlook towards the threat from Japan and your fear that, unless the Allied Forces withdrew in time, India would become a battle-field in which the Japanese would ultimately win. This feeling was attributed to you by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru himself in the course of his remarks to which reference has been made above and your own draft of the Allahabad resolution makes it plain that, both in the "Quit India" campaign and the Congress resolution which was intended to enforce it, your object was to be left in a position in which you and the Congress would be free to make terms with Japan. The Government of India note that your letter makes no attempt to meet this imputation, which they still regard as true. It is the only explanation which is consistent with your own statement that "the presence of the British in India is an invitation to the Japanese to invade India. Their withdrawal removes the bait". Nor have you been

able to explain on any theory other than that suggested in the book the contradiction between this statement and your subsequent avowal of your willingness to permit the retention of Allied troops on Indian soil.

3. The Government of India are not disposed to follow you into the various verbal points that you have raised. They do not deny that owing to your habit of reinterpreting your own statements to suit the purposes of the moment it is easy for you to quote passages from your utterances or writings which are in apparent contradiction to any view attributed to you. But the fact that you admit the discovery of important gaps in them, or that you have found it necessary from time to time to put glosses on what you have said, is itself evidence of the incredible levity with which, in a moment of grave crisis, you made pronouncements in regard to matters of the most vital importance to India's defences and her internal peace. Government can only interpret your statements in the plain sense of the words as it would appear to any honest or unbiassed reader and they are satisfied that the book "Congress Responsibility" contains no material misrepresentation of the general trend of your utterances during the relevant period.

4. You have devoted considerable space in your letter to an apparent attempt to disown the phrase attributed to you in the A.P.I. report of a press conference which you held at Wardha on the 14th July 1942, where you are reported to have said "There is no question of one more chance. After all it is an open rebellion". This press message was reproduced at the time in newspapers throughout India. You now wish the Government of India to believe that you first became aware of it on the 26th June 1943. They can only regard it as highly improbable that, if it did not correctly represent what you said, it should not have been brought to your notice at the time or that you should have left it uncontradicted during the following weeks while you were still at liberty.

5. The Government of India also note that you still seek to cast on the Government the responsibility for the disturbances for reasons which they can only regard as trivial and which have already been answered, in your published correspondence with His Excellency the Viceroy. The point which is clearly established by the book "Congress Responsibility" is that those disturbances were the natural and predictable consequence of your declaration of an "open rebellion" and the propaganda which preceded it. That you yourself could have foreseen those consequences is clear from the statement which you yourself made in court in 1922 when you admitted the impossibility of dissociating yourself from the "diabolical crimes of Chauri Chaura and the mad outrages of Bombay" and went on to say that you knew that you were playing with fire, but you had taken the risk and would do so again. If you now contend that the consequences were unintended and unforeseen, this fact is itself an admission of your own inability to judge the reactions of your followers. You now seek to excuse, if not to defend, the barbarities committed in your own name and that of the Congress rather than to condemn them. It is clear where your sympathies lie. Your letter does not contain one word of explanation of your own message "Do or Die", nor does it throw any light on your message, quoted in Appendix X of the book, which if you cannot disown it, is sufficient to refute your contention that no movement had been launched by you at the time when the disturbances took place.

6. I am finally to refer to your request for the publication of your letter. In the first place, I am to remind you of your own position, which has already been explained to you, *viz.*, that, so long as the grounds for your detention remain unchanged; Government are not prepared to afford you any facilities for communication with the general public, nor are they prepared themselves to act as agents for your propaganda. In the second place, I am to point out that you had ample opportunities during the months preceding the Congress resolution of the 8th August 1942 to make your meaning unequivocally clear before you were arrested. The fact that your own followers interpreted your

intentions in the same way as Government leaves no scope for further explanations. I am to inform you, therefore, that Government do not propose to publish your letter unless and until they think fit. This decision is, however, without prejudice to the freedom of Government to use at any time and in any manner which they think fit the various admissions contained in the communication which you have voluntarily addressed to them.

7. To the extent that your present letter may be designed to relieve you of responsibility for the Congress rebellion and the connected events that have taken place, Government regret that they cannot accept it as in any way relieving you of that responsibility, or indeed, to their regret, as a serious attempt to justify yourself. They observe again with regret that you have taken no step in your letter to dissociate yourself personally from the Congress resolution of 8th August 1942; to condemn unequivocally the violent outrages which took place in your name after the passing of that resolution; to declare yourself unequivocally in favour of the use of all the resources of India for the prosecution of the war against the Axis Powers and in particular Japan, until victory is won; or to give satisfactory assurances for good conduct in the future. And in the absence of any sign of any change of mind on your part and of any disclaimer of the policy as the result of which it has been necessary to restrain your movements and those of the Working Committee of the Congress, they are unable to take any further action on your present communication.

I am, &c.,

R. TOTTENHAM.

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(35)

To

The Additional Secretary, Home Department.

October 26th, 1943.

SIR,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 14th instant received on 18th instant.

2. Your letter makes it clear that my reply to the charges brought against me in the Government publication "Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances 1942-43" has failed in its purpose, namely, to convince the Government of my innocence of those charges. Even my good faith is impugned.

3. I observe too that the Government did not desire "comments" upon the charges. Previous pronouncements of the Government on such matters had led me to think otherwise. Be that as it may, your current letter seems to invite an answer.

4. In my opinion, I have, in my letter of 15th July last, unequivocally answered all charges referred to in your letter under reply. I have no regret for what I have done or said in the course of the struggle for India's freedom.

5. As to the Congress resolution of 8th August 1942, apart from my belief that it is not only harmless but good all round, I have no legal power to alter it in any way. That can only be done by the body that passed that resolution, *i.e.*, the All-India Congress Committee which is no doubt guided by its Working Committee. As the Government are aware, I offered to meet the members of the Working Committee in order to discuss the situation and to know their mind. But my offer was rejected. I have thought and still think that my talk with them might have some value from the Government standpoint. Hence I repeat my offer. But it may have no such value so long as the Government doubt my *bona fides*. As a *Satyagrahi* however, in spite of the handicap, I must reiterate what I hold to be good and of immediate importance in terms of war effort. But if my offer has no chance of being accepted so long as I retain my present views, and if the Government think that it is only my evil influence that corrupts people, I submit that the

members of the Working Committee and other detenus should be discharged. It is unthinkable that when India's millions are suffering from preventable starvation and thousands are dying of it, thousands of men and women should be kept in detention on mere suspicion, when their energy and the expense incurred in keeping them under duress could, at this critical time, be usefully employed in relieving distress. As I have said in my letter of 15th July last, Congressmen abundantly proved their administrative, creative and humanitarian worth at the time of the last terrible flood in Gujerat and equally terrible earthquake in Bihar. The huge place in which I am being detained with a large guard around me, I hold to be waste of public funds. I should be quite content to pass my days in any prison.

6. As to "satisfactory assurances" about my "good conduct" I can only say that I am unaware of any unworthy conduct at any time. I presume that the impression Government have of my conduct is referable to the charges mentioned in the indictment, as I have succinctly called "Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances 1942-43". And since I have not only denied the charges *in toto* but on the contrary have ventured to bring counter-charges against the Government, I think that they should agree to refer both to an impartial tribunal. Seeing that a big political organisation and not a mere individual is involved in the charges, I hold that it should be a vital part of the war effort to have the issue decided by a tribunal, if mutual discussion and effort are considered by the Government to be undesirable and/or futile.

7. Whilst your letter rejects my request that my letter of 15th July last should, in fairness to me, be published, you inform me that their decision in this matter however "is without prejudice to the freedom of Government to use at any time and in any manner which they think fit the various admissions contained in the communication which you have voluntarily addressed to them". I can only hope that this does not mean that, as in the case of the "Congress Responsiblity for the Disturbances 1942-43", garbled extracts will be published. My request is that my letter should be published in full, if and when the Government think fit to make public use of it.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI.

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(36)

HOME DEPARTMENT,
November 18th, 1943.

SIR,

In reply to your letter of October 26th I am directed to say that since there is no change in your attitude towards the Congress resolution of August 8th, 1942, and Government have received no indication that the views of any of the Members of the Working Committee differ from your own, a meeting between you would appear to serve no useful purpose. Both you and they are well aware of the conditions on which such a proposal could be entertained.

I am to add that the other points in your letter have been noted.

I am, etc.,
R. TOTTENHAM.

III.—THE GANDHI-MIRABEN LETTERS.

(37)

To

The Additional Secretary, Home Department.

February 26th, 1944.

SIR,

I have read the speech of the Hon'ble the Home Member in the Assembly on the debate arising out of the ban on Shrimati Sarojini Devi. The speech has reference among other things to the correspondence between Shrimati Mirabai and myself, and the Government's refusal to publish that correspondence. The following is the relevant portion of the speech:—

"She (Shrimati Sarojini Devi) refers, and the point has been raised in this debate, to a letter said to have been written by Miss Slade to Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Gandhi's reply and I have been asked why no publicity was given to that letter. That letter was written and answered long before the Congress leaders were placed in detention. If Mr. Gandhi had wished to give publicity to that letter he was perfectly free to do it himself. But it was a confidential communication addressed to him and I do not see any reason why Government should disclose a communication of that nature. I might say that it would not help the Congress case if it were disclosed.

"Then it has been said that Mrs. Naidu wishes to defend the Congress from the implication of being pro-Japanese. Government have never at any time, either here or at home, charged the Congress with being pro-Japanese. Well, the allusion to that in the booklet called *Congress Responsibility* refers to a statement quoted from Pandit Nehru himself. I have not the time to quote it at length but if Hon'ble Members will refer to the quotation given in the *Congress Responsibility* pamphlet they will easily find the passage in question."

Assuming that the report is correct, it makes strange reading.

Firstly, as to the non-publication by me of this correspondence between Shrimati Mirabai and myself, surely the publication was unnecessary until the charge of my being pro-Japanese was spread abroad.

Secondly, why do the Government feel squeamish about publishing "confidential" correspondence, when both the correspondents have specially invited publication?

Thirdly, I do not understand the reluctance of the Government to publish the correspondence when, according to the Hon'ble the Home Member, the correspondence will not serve the Congress case.

Fourthly, the Government seem intentionally or unintentionally to have suppressed the very relevant fact that Shrimati Mirabai wrote to Lord Linlithgow drawing attention to the libellous propaganda in the London Press at the time containing allegations that I was pro-Japanese, which allegations she invited him to repudiate. Her letter to Lord Linlithgow enclosed copies of the correspondence referred to, and asked for its publication. It was written on December 24th, long before the Government publication entitled *Congress Responsibility* which bears the date February 13th, 1943, appeared.

Fifthly, as to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's alleged statement before the Working Committee, I have already made it clear in my reply to the Government pamphlet that it was wholly wrong on their part to make use of the unauthorised notes of the discussions at the Allahabad meeting of the Working Committee, after Pandit Nehru's emphatic repudiation published in the daily press.

It is difficult for me to understand the Hon'ble the Home Member's speech and the Government persistence in making charges and innuendoes against Congress people whom they have put in custody and thus effectively prevented from answering those charges. I hope, therefore, that the Government

will at the very least see their way to publish the correspondence referred to, namely, Shrimati Miraben's letter to Lord Linlithgow of the 24th December 1942, together with the enclosures.

I am, &c.,
M. K. GANDHI.

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(38)

HOME DEPARTMENT,
March 11th, 1944.

SIR,

In reply to your letter, dated February 26th, I am directed to say that Government do not think that any useful purpose would be served at present by publishing the correspondence in question. So far as Government are concerned, there is the statement in the Home Member's speech—"Government have never at any time, either here or at home, charged the Congress with being pro-Japanese". They do not see how this can be regarded as "Government persistence in making charges and innuendoes against Congress people". So far as Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is concerned, I am again to refer you to paragraph 2 of my letter of October 14th, 1943, in which it was made clear that he did not, in his public statement, repudiate the words in the *Congress Responsibility* pamphlet to which you took exception in paragraph 18 of your letter of July 15th, 1943. There can, therefore, be no question of Government having made use of that passage after his repudiation of it.

I am, etc.,
R. TOTTENHAM.

IX.—THE LORD WAVELL LETTERS.

(39)

February 17th, 1944.

DEAR FRIEND,

Although I have had not the pleasure of meeting you, I address you on purpose as "dear friend". I am looked upon by the representatives of the British Government as a great, if not the greatest, enemy of the British. Since I regard myself as a friend and servant of humanity including the British, in token of my goodwill I call you, the foremost representative of the British in India, my "friend".

2. I have received, in common with some others, a notice informing me, for the first time, why I am detained, and conferring on me the right of representation against my detention. I have duly sent my reply, but I have as yet heard nothing from the Government. A reminder too has gone after a wait of thirteen days.

3. I have said, some only have received notices, because, out of the six of us in this camp, only three have received them. I presume that all will receive them in due course. But my mind is filled with the suspicion that the notices have been sent as a matter of form only, and not with any intention to do justice. I do not wish to burden this letter with argument. I repeat, what I said in the correspondence with your predecessor, that the Congress and I are wholly innocent of the charges brought against us. Nothing but an impartial tribunal to investigate the Government case, and the Congress case against the Government, will bring out the truth.

4. The speeches recently made on behalf of the Government in the Assembly on the release motion, and on the gagging order on Shri Sarojini Devi, I consider to be playing with fire. I distinguish between defeat of Japanese arms and Allied victory. The latter must carry with it the deliverance of India from the foreign yoke. The spirit of India demands complete freedom from all foreign dominance and would therefore resist Japanese yoke equally with British or any other. The Congress represents that spirit in full measure. It has grown to be an institution whose roots have gone deep down into the Indian soil. I was therefore staggered to read that Government were satisfied with things as they were going. Had they not got from among the Indian people the men and money they wanted? Was not the Government machinery running smooth? This self-satisfaction bodes ill for Britain, India and the world, if it does not quickly give place to a searching of hearts in British high places.

5. Promises for the future are valueless in the face of the world struggle in which the fortune of all nations and therefore of the whole of humanity is involved. Present performance is the peremptory need of the moment, if the war is to end in world peace and not be a preparation for another war bloodier than the present, if, indeed, there can be a bloodier. Therefore real war effort must mean satisfaction of India's demand. "Quit India" only gives vivid expression to that demand, and has not the sinister and poisonous meaning attributed to it without warrant by the Government of India. The expression is charged with the friendliest feeling for Britain in terms of the whole of humanity.

6. I have done. I thought that, if I claim to be a friend of the British, as I do, nothing should deter me from sharing my deepest thoughts with you. It is no pleasure for me to be in this camp, where all my creature comforts are supplied without any effort on my part, when I know that millions outside are starving for want of food. But I should feel utterly helpless if I went out and missed *the* food by which alone living becomes worth while.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI.

(40)

February 25th, 1944.

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Thank you for your letter of February 17th.

You will by now have received the reply to your representation. I am sorry to hear that three of those in the Agha Khan's palace with you have not received notices. This will be looked into at once.

I expect you have seen in the papers reports of the speech I made to the Legislature on the same day on which you wrote your letter. This states my point of view, and I need not repeat what I said then. I enclose a copy for your convenience if you wish to read it.

I take this opportunity to express to you deep sympathy from my wife and myself at the death of Mrs. Gandhi; we understand what this loss must mean to you after so many years of companionship.

Yours sincerely,

WAVELL.

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(41)

March 9th, 1944.

DEAR FRIEND,

I must thank you for your prompt reply to my letter of 17th February. At the outset I sent you and Lady Wavell my thanks for your kind condolences on the death of my wife. Though for her sake I have welcomed her death as bringing freedom from living agony, I feel the loss more than I had thought I should. We were a couple outside the ordinary. It was in 1906 that, after mutual consent and after unconscious trials, we definitely adopted self-restraint as a rule of life. To my great joy this knit us together as never before. We ceased to be two different entities. Without my wishing it, she chose to lose herself in me. The result was she became truly my *better* half. She was a woman always of very strong will which, in our early days, I used to mistake for obstinacy. But that strong will enabled her to become, quite unwittingly, my teacher in the art and practice of non-violent non-co-operation. The practice began with my own family. When I introduced it in 1906 in the political field, it came to be known by the more comprehensive and specially coined name of *Satyagraha*. When the course of Indian imprisonments commenced in South Africa, Shri Kasturba was among the civil resisters. She went through greater physical trials than I. Although she had gone through several imprisonments, she did not take kindly to the present incarceration during which all creature comforts were at her disposal. My arrest simultaneously with that of many others, and her own immediately following, gave her a great shock and embittered her. She was wholly unprepared for my arrest. I had assured her that the Government trusted my non-violence, and would not arrest me unless I courted arrest myself. Indeed, the nervous shock was so great that after her arrest she developed violent diarrhœa and, but for the attention that Dr. Sushila Nayyar, who was arrested at the same time as the deceased, was able to give her, she might have died before joining me in this detention camp. My presence soothed her and the diarrhœa stopped without any further predicament. Not so the bitterness. It led to fretfulness ending in painfully slow dissolution of the body.

In the light of the foregoing you will perhaps understand the pain I felt when I read in the papers the statement made on behalf of the Government, which I hold was an unfortunate departure from truth, regarding her who was precious to me beyond measure. I ask you please to send for and read the complaint in the matter which I have forwarded to the Additional Secretary to the Government of India (Home Department). Truth is said to be the first and the heaviest casualty in war. How I wish in this war it could be otherwise in the case of the Allied Powers!

I now come to your address which you delievered before the Legislature and of which you kindly sent me a copy. When the newspapers containing the address were received, I was by the bedside of the deceased. Shri Mirabai read

to me the Associated Press report. But my mind was elsewhere. Therefore the receipt of your speech in a handy form was most welcome. I have now read it with all the attention it deserves. Having gone through it, I feel drawn to offer a few remarks, all the more so as you have observed that the views expressed by you "need not be regarded as final". May this letter lead to a reshaping of some of them!

In the middle of page two you speak of the welfare of the "Indian peoples". I have seen in some Viceregal pronouncements the inhabitants of India being referred to as the people of India. Are the two expressions synonymous?

At page thirteen referring to the attainment of self-government by India you say, "I am absolutely convinced not only that the above represents the genuine desire of the British people, but that they wish to see an early realisation of it. It is qualified only at present by an absolute determination to let nothing stand in the way of the earliest possible defeat of Germany and Japan; and by a resolve to see that in the solution of the constitutional problem full account is taken of the interests of those who have loyally supported us in this war and at all other times—the soldiers who have served the common cause; the people who have worked with us; the Rulers and populations of the States to whom we are pledged; the minorities who have trusted us to see that they get a fair deal:.....but until the two main Indian parties at least can come to terms, I do not see any immediate hope of progress." Without reasoning it out, I venture to give my paraphrase of your pronouncement. "We, the British, shall stand by the Indian soldier whom we have brought into being and trained for consolidating our rule and position in India, and who, by experience, we have found can effectively help us in our wars against other nations. We shall also stand by the Rulers of the Indian States, many of whom are our creation and all of whom owe their present position to us, even when these Rulers curb or actually crush the spirit of the people whom they rule. Similarly shall we stand by the minorities whom too we have encouraged and used against the vast majority when the latter have at all attempted to resist our rule. It makes no difference that they (the majority) seek to replace it by a rule of the will of the people of India taken as a whole. And in no case will we transfer power unless Hindus and Muslims come to us with an agreement among themselves." The position taken up in the paragraph quoted and interpreted by me is no new thing. I regard the situation thus envisaged as hopeless, and I claim in this to represent the thought of the man in the street. Out of the contemplation of this hopelessness was born the anguished cry of "Quit India". What I see happening in this country day after day provides a complete vindication of the "Quit India" formula as defined by me in my considered writings.

I note as I read your speech that you do not regard the sponsors of the formula of "Quit India" as outcasts to be shunned by society. You believe them to be high-minded persons. Then, treat them as such and trust their interpretation of their own formula and you cannot go wrong.

After developing the Cripps offer, you have said at page sixteen in the middle of the paragraph, ".....the demand for release of those leaders who are in detention is an utterly barren one until there is some sign on their part of willingness to co-operate. It needs no consultation with any one or anything but his own conscience for any one of those under detention to decide whether he will withdraw from the Quit India resolution and the policy which had such tragic consequences, and will co-operate in the great tasks ahead." Then again, reverting to the same subject you say on pages nineteen and twenty, "There is an important element which stands aloof; I recognise how much ability and high-mindedness it contains; but I deplore its present policy and methods as barren and unpractical. I should like to have the co-operation of this element in solving the present and the future problems of India. If its leaders feel that they cannot consent to take part in the present Government of India, they may still be able to assist in considering future problems. But I see no reason to release those responsible for the declaration of August 8th,

1942, until I am convinced that the policy of non-co-operation and even of obstruction has been withdrawn—not in sack-cloth and ashes, that helps no one—but in the recognition of a mistaken and unprofitable policy."

I am surprised that you, an eminent soldier and man of affairs, should hold such an opinion. How can the withdrawal of a resolution, arrived at jointly by hundreds of men and women after much debating and careful consideration, be a matter of individual conscience? A resolution jointly undertaken can be honourably, conscientiously and properly withdrawn only after joint discussion and deliberation. Individual conscience may come into play after this necessary step, not before. Is a prisoner ever *free* to exercise his conscience? Is it just and proper to expect him to do so?

Again, you recognise "much ability and high-mindedness" in those who represent the Congress organisation and then deplore their present policy and methods as "barren and unpractical". Does not the second statement cancel the first? Able and high-minded men may come to erroneous decisions, but I have not before heard such people's policy and methods being described as "barren and unpractical". Is it not up to you to discuss the *pros* and *cons* of their policy with them before pronouncing judgment, especially when they are also admittedly representatives of millions of their people? Does it become an all-powerful Government to be afraid of the consequences of releasing unarmed men and women with a backing only of men and women equally unarmed and even pledged to non-violence? Moreover, why should you hesitate to know their minds and reactions?

Then you have talked of the "tragic consequences" of the "Quit India" resolution. I have said enough in my reply to the Government pamphlet "Congress Responsibility, etc.", combating the charge that the Congress was responsible for those consequences. I commend the pamphlet and my reply to your attention, if you have not already seen them. Here I would just like to emphasise what I have already said. Had Government stayed action till they had studied my speeches and those of the members of the Working Committee history would have been written differently.

You have made much of the fact that your Executive Council is predominantly Indian. Surely, their being Indians no more makes them representatives of India than non-Indians. Conversely it is quite conceivable that a non-Indian may be a true representative of India, if he is elected by the vote of the Indian people. It would give no satisfaction even if the head of the Indian Government was a distinguished Indian *not* chosen by the free vote of the people.

Even you, I am sorry, have fallen into the common error of describing the Indian forces as having been recruited by "voluntary enlistment". A person who takes to soldiering as a profession will enlist himself wherever he gets his market wage. Voluntary enlistment has come to bear by association a meaning much higher than that which attaches to an enlistment like that of the Indian soldier. Were those who carried out the orders at the Jallianwalla massacre volunteers? The very Indian soldiers who have been taken out of India and are showing unexampled bravery will be ready to point their rifles unerringly at their own countrymen at the orders of the British Government, their employers. Will they deserve the honourable name of volunteers?

You are flying all over India. You have not hesitated to go among the skeletons of Bengal. May I suggest an interruption in your scheduled flights and a descent upon Ahmednagar and the Aga Khan's Palace in order to probe the hearts of your captives? We are all friends of the British, however much we may criticise the British Government and system in India. If you can but trust, you will find us to be the greatest helpers in the fight against Nazism, Fascism, Japanism and the like.

Now I revert to your letter of the 25th February. Shri Mirabai and I have received replies to our representations. The remaining inmates have received their notices. The reply received by me I regard as a mockery; the one received by Shri Mirabai as an insult. According to the report of the Home Member's answer to a question in the Central Assembly, the replies received by us seem to be no replies. He is reported to have said that the stage "for the review of the cases had not yet arrived. Government at present were only receiving

representations from prisoners". If the representations in reply to the Government notices are to be considered merely by the executive that imprisoned them without trial, it will amount to a farce and an eye-wash, meant perhaps for foreign consumption, but not as an indication of a desire to do justice. My views are known to the Government. I may be considered an impossible man—though altogether wrongly I would protest. But what about Shri Mirabai? As you know, she is the daughter of an Admiral and former Commander-in-Chief of these waters. But she left the life of ease and chose instead to throw in her lot with me. Her parents, recognising her urge to come to me, gave her their full blessings. She spends her time in the service of the masses. She went to Orissa at my request to understand the plight of the people of that benighted land. That Government was hourly expecting Japanese invasion. Papers were to be removed or burnt, and withdrawal of the civil authority from the coast was being contemplated. Shri Mirabai made Chaudwar (Cuttack) airfield her headquarters, and the local military commander was glad of the help she could give him. Later she went to New Delhi and saw General Sir Alan Hartley and General Molesworth, who both appreciated her work and greeted her as one of their own class and caste. It therefore baffles me to understand her incarceration. The only reason for burying her alive, so far as I can see, is that she has committed the crime of associating herself with me. I suggest your immediately releasing her, or your seeing her and then deciding. I may add that she is not yet free from the pain for the alleviation of which the Government sent Captain Simcox at my request. It would be a tragedy if she became permanently disabled in detention. I have mentioned Shri Mirabai's case because it is typically unjust.

I apologise to you for a letter which has gone beyond the length I had prescribed for myself. It has also become very personal and very unconventional. That, however, is the way my loyalty to friends works. I have written without reservation. Your letter and your speech have given me the opening. For the sake of India, England and humanity I hope you will treat this as an honest and friendly, if candid, response to your speech.

Years ago while teaching the boys and girls of Tolstoy Farm in South Africa I happened to read to them Wordsworth's "Character of the Happy Warrior". It recurs to me as I am writing to you. It will delight my heart to realise that warrior in you. There will be little difference between the manners and methods of the Axis Powers and the Allies if the war is to resolve itself into a mere trial of brute strength.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI.

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(42)

March 28th, 1944.

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I have your letter of March 9th. You will receive a separate reply from the Home Secretary on your complaint about Mr. Bulter's answer to a question in the House of Commons. I can only say that I deeply regret if you are left with the impression that the Government of India have been unsympathetic in the matter of Mrs. Gandhi's illness. Miss Slade's case will be examined in the light of what you say about her.

I do not think it profitable that we should enter into lengthy argument, and do not propose to answer in detail the points you raise in your letter. But I think it best to give you a clear statement of my views on the future development of India and the reasons for your present detention.

The draft declaration of His Majesty's Government which Sir Stafford Cripps brought to India stated in unmistakable terms the intention of His Majesty's Government to give India self-government under a constitution of her own devising, arrived at by agreement between the principal elements. I need hardly say that I am in entire accord with that aim, and only seek the best means to implement it without delivering India to confusion and turmoil. Much

wisdom and a spirit of goodwill and compromise will be required to arrive at the right solution, but with good leadership I am sure a solution can be found.

Meanwhile there is much work to be done, particularly in the economic field, in preparing India to take her proper place in the modern world. She must be ready to welcome change and progress in many hitherto unfamiliar directions and to raise the standard of living of her population. Such work is primarily non-political: it may well hasten a political settlement, but cannot await it. It will give rise to many new and absorbing problems demanding the best abilities that India can bring to bear on them. India cannot be expected to tackle these problems in isolation from the rest of the world, or without the aid that Britain can give and the services of an experienced administration. But it is work in which leaders of all parties can co-operate with the certainty that they are helping the country towards the goal of freedom.

I regret that I must view the present policy of the Congress party as hindering and not forwarding Indian progress to self-government and development. During a war in which the success of the United Nations against the Axis powers is vital both to India and to the world, as you yourself have recognised, the Working Committee of Congress declined to co-operate, ordered Congress ministries to resign, and decided to take no part in the administration of the country or in the war effort which India was making to assist the United Nations. At the greatest crisis of all for India, at a time when Japanese invasion was possible, the Congress party decided to pass a resolution calling on the British to leave India, which could not fail to have the most serious effect on our ability to defend the frontiers of India against the Japanese. I am quite clear that India's problems cannot be solved by an immediate and complete withdrawal of the British.

I do not accuse you or the Congress party of any wish deliberately to aid the Japanese. But you are much too intelligent a man, Mr. Gandhi, not to have realised that the effect of your resolution must be to hamper the prosecution of the war; and it is clear to me that you had lost confidence in our ability to defend India, and were prepared to take advantage of our supposed military straits to gain political advantage. I do not see how those responsible for the safety of India could have acted otherwise than they did and could have failed to arrest those who sponsored the resolution. As to general Congress responsibility for the disturbances which followed, I was, as you know, Commander-in-Chief at the time; my vital lines of communication to the Burma frontier were cut by Congress supporters, in the name of Congress, often using the Congress flag. I cannot therefore hold Congress guiltless of what occurred; and I cannot believe that you, with all your acumen and experience, can have been unaware of what was likely to follow from your policy. I do not believe that the Congress party's action in this matter represented the real feeling of India, nor that the Congress attitude of non-co-operation represents the opinion of anything like a majority of India.

To sum up, I believe that with general co-operation we can in the immediate future do much to solve India's economic problems, and can make steady and substantial progress towards Indian self-government.

I believe that the greatest contribution that the Congress party can make towards India's welfare is to abandon the policy of non-co-operation and to join whole-heartedly with the other Indian parties and with the British in helping India forward in economic and political progress—not by any dramatic or spectacular stroke, but by hard steady work towards the end ahead. I think that the greatest service you could do to India would be to advise unequivocally such co-operation.

In the meantime I regard it as my task in the interests of India, of which I am a sincere friend, to concentrate all my efforts on bringing this war to a victorious conclusion, and to prepare for India's advancement after the war. In this task I feel I can count on very considerable co-operation from the majority of Indians.

Yours sincerely,
WAVELL.

April 9th, 1944.

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 23rd March received by me on the 3rd instant. Please accept my thanks for it.

I take up the general matter first.

You have sent me a frank reply. I propose to reciprocate your courtesy by being perfectly frank. Friendship to be true demands frankness even though it may some time appear unpleasant. If anything I say offends you, please accept my apology in advance.

It is a pity that you have refused to deal with important points raised in my letter.

Your letter is a plea for co-operation by the Congress in the present administration and failing that in planning for the future. In my opinion, this requires equally between the parties and mutual trust. But equality is absent and Government distrust of the Congress can be seen at every turn. The result is that suspicion of Government is universal. Add to this the fact that Congressmen have no faith in the competence of the Government to ensure India's future good. This want of faith is based upon bitter experience of the past and present conduct of the British administration of India. Is it not high time that you co-operate with the people of India through their elected representatives instead of expecting co-operation from them?

All this was implied in the August resolution. The sanction behind the demand in the resolution was not violence, but self-suffering. Any one, be he Congressman or other, who acted against this rule of conduct had no authority to use the Congress name for his action. But I see that this resolution repels you as it did Lord Linlithgow. You know that I have joined issue on the point. I have seen nothing since to alter my view. You have been good enough to credit me with "intelligence", "experience" and "acumen". Let me say that all these three gifts have failed to make me realise that the effect of the Congress resolution "must be to hamper the prosecution of the war". The responsibility for what followed the hasty arrests of Congressmen must rest solely on the Government. For, they invited the crisis, not the authors of the resolution.

You remind me that you were Commander-in-Chief at the time. How much better it would have been for all concerned if confidence in the immeasurable strength of arms had ruled your action instead of fear of a rebellion! Had the Government stayed their hand at the time, surely all the bloodshed of those months would have been avoided. And it is highly likely that the Japanese menace would have become a thing of the past. Unfortunately it was not to be. And so the menace is still with us, and what is more, the Government are pursuing a policy of suppression of liberty and truth. I have studied the latest ordinance about the detenus, and I recall the Rowlatt Act of 1919. It was popularly called the Black Act. As you know it gave rise to an unprecedented agitation. That Act pales into insignificance before the series of ordinances that are being showered from the Viceregal throne. Martial Law in effect governs not one Province as in 1919, but the whole of India. Things are moving from bad to worse.

You say, "It is clear to me that you had lost confidence in our ability to defend India and were prepared to take advantage of our supposed military straits to gain political advantage". I must deny both the charges. I venture to suggest that you should follow the golden rule, and withdraw your statement and suspend judgment till you have submitted the evidence in your possession to an impartial tribunal and obtained its verdict. I confess that I do not make the request with much confidence. For, in dealing with Congressmen and others Government have combined the prosecutor, judge and jailor in the same person and thus made proper defence impossible on the part of the accused. Judgments of courts are being rendered nugatory by fresh ordinances. No man's freedom

can be said to be safe in this extraordinary situation. You will probably retort that it is an exigency of the war. I wonder?

As I visualise India today, it is one vast prison containing four hundred million souls. You are its sole custodian. The Government prisons are prisons within this prison. I agree with you that whilst you hold the views expressed in your letter under reply, the proper place for one like me is a Government prison. And unless there is a change of heart, view and policy on the part of the Government, I am quite content to remain your prisoner. Only, I hope you will listen to the request made by me through the proper channels to remove me and my fellow prisoners to some other prison where the cost of our detention need not be even one-tenth of what it is today.

As to my complaint about Mr. Butler's statement and later the Home Secretary's I have received two letters from the Home Department in reply. I am sorry to say, they have appeared to me highly unsatisfactory. They ignore patent facts, and betray an obstinate refusal to face truth even on a whole non-political issue. My correspondence with the Home Department continues. I invite your attention to it, if you can spare the time and are interested in the subject.

I am glad and thankful that Shri Mirabai's (Miss Slade's) case is being considered in the light of what I say about her in my letter.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI.

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